

A study on change in behavioral pattern with reference to the select novels of Amitav Ghosh

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Abstract: This article is an attempt to illustrate the different ways through which culture gets transformed as a result of contact with other cultures. The desire to gain sociability forms ground for cultural changes such as acculturation, assimilation, diffusion and other types of cultural changes. Amitav Ghosh is a prolific writer who occupies an invincible space among the national and also the international writers. Six of his novels are analysed to study the changes in the behavioral patterns of the characters in the novel. Cognition is a mighty factor that conditions the thought of every human. The desire to garner solidarity and establish sociability is the chief reason for cultural compromises. Therefore, Georg Simmel's theory on sociabilities is taken into account to support this study.

Keywords: Cognition, hybridity, identity, tolerance, acceptance, solidarity, language, code mixing, code switching, hegemony

1. Introduction

The world is an intricate fusion of differences and this multifacetedness makes it sophisticated and incomprehensible. Uniformity would deprive the world of a social structure and such a world bereft of differences is inconceivable. It is pretty obvious that people in different regions acquired different cultural, religious and lingual practices naturally and consequently they differ from region to region and nation to nation. The language one speaks and the dress he wears and the way he prays and all such factors are bequeathed from one generation to another. In the bygone days there weren't any need or means to communicate with people of another race. With all the explorations and the advancement in science and technology, people of different nations meet and correspond and as a result, each one becomes aware of the differences in their cultural, lingual and customary practices. These meetings harbor different colours of emotions among different groups. At times, people tend to view the practices of other races with contempt. This contempt leads to hatred, conflict and restiveness in the world. On the other hand, education, experience and necessity goad people to accept dissimilarities, whereby new identities are born.

Collective effort shall bear fruit only when the group ties up and support each other. A sense of oneness is conceived when people of similar backgrounds and ideologies congregate. Civilization is generally allied with culture and any ritual or practice that shocks the human conscience is ridiculed as barbaric and savage. Where as social and cultural anthropologists are impartial and therefore the practices of all the nations, regions, continents and ethnicity are defined as culture. This paper aims to identify the ways through which one acquires culture and the way it gets transformed. Cultural changes take place in different patterns depending on the flexibility of the followers. Of course, there are iron-curtained nations where such changes are strictly a taboo. The East-West encounter is nothing new; it has been a part and parcel of the society since the explorers discovered new lands. Exploration resulted in colonization, followed by slavery, trade, immigration and soon to the recent globalization. As a matter of fact, cultural changes were the cause and outcome. The factor that provokes change is the craving to accomplish sociability and solidarity. The degree of friendliness typically found among members of a group, nation or society is called as sociability. The degree to which people in a community, nation or society share a common understanding of the tasks and goals is called as solidarity. This sense of sociability and solidarity has existed since the birth of humans. These shared notions extended with the growing socioeconomic influence. While sea explorations marked the beginning of cultural sociability, it took different forms and names such as globalization, immigration, diasporas and many more. The changes that have taken place due to the influence of the aforementioned factors have made sociology an interesting subject. Therefore, 'society' is the protagonist of this study.

1.1 The Theory of Sociabilities

George Simmel (1949) in his work *The Sociology of Sociabilities* has made a journey in search of the nucleus of the formation of society. As per his view “the impulses and interest, which a man experiences in himself and which push him out to other men, bring about all the forms of association by which mere sum of separate are made into a ‘society’ (254). Not two human think alike, but the process of thinking of all humans is identical. Adolf Bastian is a Bremen born anthropologist who is honoured with the title of ‘father of German anthropology’. He has promulgated the concept called “psychic unity of mankind” wherein he states that every human mind function in the same way regardless of race and culture as “every human mind inherits a complement of species-specific ‘elementary ideas’” (1983). Several other anthropologists and sociologists endorsed his theories and few among them are Franz Boas, Edward Taylor, and Carl Jung. Jung formulated his theory of archetype and collective unconscious grounding on Bastian’s concept. Sreela. B in her article titled “Mimicry as the play-form of life in theselect novelsof AmitavGhoshhasstated

Endorsing one another in a society is a man-made process intended to acquire support and it has culminated in the configuration of a collection of cultures, religions, languages, and customs in the world. Human intelligence and perceptions cultivate societies and humans all over the world display identical thought process due to the homogeneity of the species called *Homo sapiens*. The lives of humans are inextricably interconnected with each other. The collectivity of their lives, experiences, norms, culture, ethics, beliefs, customs, religion, conflicts, and several such factors form the foundation of sociability and solidarity (2015).

Family and society are inter-reliant as everyone acknowledges that families construct the society. However, once formed, it is the society that dictates the family of what to do and what not to do. The societal ground rules manipulate the thoughts, beliefs and attitudes of every entity which are dispensed to the family and subsequently passed on to the larger circles and the next generation. The cultural patterns which every nation follows today are metamorphosed versions of their authentic culture. Throughout history, humans have changed their customs,

beliefs, habits so as to suit their changing needs. Consequently cultures meet and one such outcome is labeled as East-West encounter which has been a hot topic in several writings by Indians. Sociability is the quality of being sociable, affable and gregarious. This gift is obligatory for a harmonious living in the society. It is these associations that facilitate people to institute comradeship in the globalized world.

Different manifestations of cultural transformations are christened as acculturation, diffusion, transculturation, and assimilation. All these forms of hybridizations are born out of man’s desire to psychologically unite with the society. Winthrop suggests that “this change is brought about under conditions of direct contact between individuals of each society” (1991). “Individuals of a foreign or minority culture learn the language, habits, and values of a standard or the dominant culture by the cultural process of acculturation. The process by which these individuals enter the social positions, as well as acquire the political, economic, and educational standards of the dominant culture is called assimilation. These individuals, through the social process of assimilation, become integrated within the standard culture” (Thompson, 1996).

Cognition, environment, and society influence the thought process of humans unfathomably. In other words, thoughts are encoded from the data of experience. Being a social anthropologist, Ghosh has visited many nations in search of its roots and ramifications. Influenced by these travel experiences, Ghosh blends his imagination with realism and consequently his novels exemplify the means of cultural hybridization. There are a few episodes in the novels of Ghosh that validate John Locke’s ‘Tabula Rasa’ theory, wherein he compares the human mind to a blank slate which is encoded by nature. This theory is otherwise termed as ‘nature vs. nurture’ as it affirms the relationship between environs and humans in shaping his thoughts and perceptions. All human beings habitually follow the practices which they inherit from the ancestors and follow it since their childhood. Naturally, they believe that their practices are the right way of living. In the lives of many individuals, customs, practices and culture overpower the idiosyncrasies of every individual. Defying cognition, few people decree themselves as egalitarians having no regard for religious, racial and such other differences. It is so unfortunate that they recognize their affinity for all those attributes only when situations warrant.

2. Multiculturalism in Ghosh’s novels

Amitav Ghosh belongs to the literary tradition that was nurtured and nourished by Rushdie and others. Like many of his contemporaries, he is massively influenced by the political and cultural milieu of post-independent India. He is a multicultural, multi-geographical and also a historical writer. He selects his characters from every corner of the world and does an in-depth research on history and various other arenas which are to be dealt in his novels. His adeptness at deciphering the psychology of the characters is palpable in all his novels and readers find it awe-inspiring. Amitav Ghosh has definitely attained unparalleled success among the prominent Indian Writers in English. His novelty in the use of language has received critical acclaim. “Loss of Homeland” is the predominant theme in colonial as well as post colonial novels. The sense of not belonging to the place where they belong to resurfaces in major societal changes.

Sea of Poppies is a very popular novel by Ghosh grounded on the Indo-China war on opium trade. This novel forms a part of the *Ibistrilogy*. Neel, the dethroned Zamindar (landlord) in Ghosh’s *Sea of Poppies* is an

example of how these three elements overpower 'Man'. Neel wonders at his own hatred towards food cooked by unknown hands during his imprisonment:

Neel had always taken pride in laying claim to his lineage of egalitarianism, all the more since it was his prerogative to sit on a Raja's gudee: but why, then, had he never before eaten anything prepared by unknown hand? He could think of no answer other than ease of habit: because he had always done what was expected of him; because the legion of people who controlled his daily existence had seen to it that it happened in that way and no other. He had thought of his everyday routines as a performance, a duty and nothing more; one of the many little enactments that were required by the demands of social existence, ... it was just an illusion, no more than a matter of playing a part in the great charade of conducting a householder's life. (2008)

In the novel *In An Antique Land*, an ardent Muslim named Ustaz Mustafa compels the staunch Hindu narrator to go to the Mosque with him and join their prayers. The narrator is reluctant to join them and Ustaz Mustafa flees from the spot as soon as he hears the call for prayer from the mosque. The narrator himself deliberates on the reasons for his reluctance. The irony is that the narrator has visited the land for the purpose of learning the origin and culture of that land. "But when the moment had come, I'd known that I wouldn't be able to do it: I had been too afraid, and for the life of me I could not understand why" (Ghosh, 2006). Ustaz Mustafa is not receptive of another religion and he believes that his God and method of worship is infallible. On the other hand, the narrator himself is psychologically inhibited and vehemently refuses to worship an unfamiliar God.

Paulette in *Sea of Poppies*, Ila in *The Shadow Lines*, Dolly, the exiled Princesses and Arjun in *The Glass Palace* typify the environmental process on which culture is grounded. All these characters endure identity crises in the land where they belong as well as in the land where they are fostered in. They represent the displaced and uprooted community who are in search of their centre. Paulette is the daughter of a French botanist named Pierre Lambert. She is born in the dinghy owned by Jodu's father. Paulette's mother dies soon after the child birth and Jodu's mother becomes her wet nurse. Thereafter, she is bred in binging all Bengal traditions and Jodu becomes her sibling. "As for Paulette, the first language she learnt was Bengali, and the first solid food she ate was a rice-and-dal khichri cooked by Jodu's mother. In the matter of clothing she far preferred saris to pinafores" (Ghosh, 2008). It is this adaptation of Bengali culture that makes her life miserable at the house of Mr. Burnham, who adopts her after the demise of her father.

The Shadow Lines is a novel in which cultural differences shape one of the major themes. Ila, the narrator's childhood friend and with whom he is in love becomes the horizon of cross-cultural confrontation. She is a Britain-bred Indian and therefore she habitually follows the culture of her host country which is frowned upon by the people of her native land. She holds no desire to return to her native soil as she finds it hard to adapt to the cultural constraints in India. Asians have always dictated strict regulations on women's behaviour, culture, and dress. On the contrary, western nations give room for liberty of women. Ila finds the western mode of life more feasible and cozy. She states the reason for her unwillingness to the narrator in the following words. "It's only because I want to be free. Free of what? I said. Free of you! She shouted back. Free of your bloody culture and free of all of you" (Ghosh, 1988).

Culture is conveyed through different medium of communication: "Culture [consists] of learned systems of meaning, communicated by means of natural language and other symbol systems, having representational, directive and affective functions, and capable of creating cultural entities and particular senses of reality" (D'Andrade, 1988). Cognition in humans is conscious and unconscious, concrete or abstract, as well as intuitive (like knowledge of a language) and conceptual (like a model of a language). Cognitive processes use prevailing knowledge and breed new knowledge.

Dolly in *The Glass Palace* is well accustomed to the practice of *Shiko* (prostrating) while entering the room of the King and the Queen. Similar to Dolly, all other maids who are brought up in the Glass Palace are quite tuned to the rituals of reverence. After the deportation of the royals, all the maids, except Dolly return to their homeland. In order to assist them in daily chores, Indians are hired and are forced to imitate all the rituals of *shiko* and walking on the fours. Habituated to the rules and practices of Burmese royals, Dolly does not realize the reason behind the difficulty of other maids in following them. The practices which Dolly find to be absolutely normal are considered bizarre by the people of another nationality and culture. "To her it seemed much easier than having to stand up every time you wanted to do something. It was much more restful this way: when you weren't doing anything in particular you could relax with your weight on your heels" (Ghosh, 2000).

2.1. Hybridity of Cultures

Dolly exemplifies the process of diffusion where the cultural aspects of two different cultures blend. She exhibits the influence by Indian culture due to the long stay in India. While Rajkumar takes Dolly with him to Burma on the ship he introduces her to his mentor Saya John. Unconsciously she joins her hands together in the Indian way to pay Saya John her respects. This moment in the novel testifies the impact of the environment and cognition in the cultivation of culture and related practices.

A British midwife named Mrs Wright is appointed to support the Queen during her period of pregnancy. She denies vehemently to shikoi in the presence of Queen. The Queen makes this appeal to Mr. Cox, a police officer

who is given the charge of the royals and his response only disappoints the Queen. "She could bow, he said, from the waist, but she needn't shiko and certainly wouldn't crawl. She was an Englishwoman" (Ghosh, 2000). Likewise the Britishers refuse to follow the Mandalay protocol and the Queen makes it a point not to acknowledge their entry and the visitors are expected to take the low chairs around Her Highness themselves.

Education is a dominant phenomenon in relegating culture to the learners. Educating the colonies was a shrewd decision of the colonizers through which they found success in multiplying the adorers of Western culture. Arjun is a prominent and complex character in the novel *The Glass Palace*. Arjun is the nephew of Uma and he is brought up in a Bengal middle-class family. Although he was educated in India, the system of education that was followed in his school is the one introduced by the British.

Unlike Paulette in *Sea of Poppies*, Arjun is at ease in behaving western as he has learned to dance the tango and to eat roast beef with a knife and fork. He grows up and serves in the British Indian army and during the Second World War; he is haunted by the thoughts of his own identity. A group of Indians in the British Indian army plan to become renegades and help Japan to vanquish Britain, which would result in the liberation of India. An Anglicized Indian nicknamed Hardy persuades Arjun to join the group and contribute to the liberation of India. But thousands of questions on identity bombard him and he is perplexed, not knowing to whom to render his support to. He is aware that "except for the color of our skin, most people in India wouldn't even recognize us as Indians. We wanted to be sahibs and that's what we've become." He is not sure that "we can undo all of that just by putting up a new flag" (Ghosh, 2000). His thought process has been steered in such a way to support westernization. Throughout the novel he seems to be an ardent supporter of the British and only towards the end of the novel he returns to his nativity, once the layer of delusion melts he recognizes the bitter facts.

2.2. Language and Culture

Languages play the dual role of creating sociability and also the medium to express solidarity. "Language is an indicator as well as a protector of identity. Communicative potential and power of the language is to an extent that it has been considered as the most important and significant element of solidarity" (Habermas, 1979). Especially among the migrants, language remains an effective tool to solidarity. Ghosh in his novels introduces the readers to several languages both national and international. Code-switching is a very common and effective means to establish rapport and earn solidarity. However, their love for their mother tongue remains intact and is palpable when they happen to meet their own lingual counterparts. The day when Tha'mma meets Mayadebi epitomizes their long-preserved love for their dialect. On their arrival "Mayadebi jumped out and she and my grandmother hurried toward each other and embraced, laughing, and talking quickly in that language that none of us could understand properly, their old Dhaka dialect" (Ghosh, 2004).

In *The Circle of Reason*, Ghosh portrays the village 'Lalpukur' as the abode where refugees flooded during the war time. He emphasizes the potential of language by narrating how the migrants in Lalpukur village cherish their tongue. They take pride in the complexity of their language which makes the non-native listeners goggle. The migrants speak the language of their host land to gain an identity in their new land yet they sustain the love of their language in their own way. For instance:

Most of the people of Lalpukur belonged originally to the remote district of Noakhali, in the far east of Bengal close to Burma. They had immigrated to India in a slow steady trickle in the years after East Pakistan became East Pakistan. Most of them left everything but their dialect behind. It was a nasal sing-song Bengali, with whom knew what mixed in of Burmese and the languages of the hills to the east? Many of them had learnt the speech of West Bengal, but it had only made their own dialect dearer to them— as a mark of common belonging... (Ghosh, 1986)

The emigrants thereby ascertain solidarity with the natives of the village in Lalpukur and simultaneously preserve their ethnic identity by retaining their dialect among themselves. Learning the language of the host country is definitely an effective means to seek the acceptance of people of different races. In *The Hungry Tide*, Nilima recounts the pathetic conditions of the Dalits (caste based untouchables) after the partition of Bangladesh. The poorest of the rural people were exploited by the religious fanatics and consequently they were sheltered in a resettlement camp in central India. The camp was more like a concentration camp with no means to escape and "they could not speak the languages of that area and the local people treated them as intruders, attacking them with bows, arrows and other weapons" (Ghosh, 2004). A juxtaposition of the refugees in Lalpukur and Bangladesh proves the importance of adaptation of language. The people who settle in Lalpukur adapt to changes for survival whereas it is the inability of the refugees in Bangladesh to adapt to change that results in their own predicament.

In the novel *The River of Smoke*, Ghosh delineates the sense of pride and the love in which the Chinese preserve their language, culture and food. Britain had faced a lot of hurdles while trading with China. The Chinese believed that they were the most sophisticated society and their food, customs and products were superior to that of other nations. The Chinese were adamant about their communications being purely in Chinese which the Britishers never paid any heed to. Consequently, the trade between China and Britain was in many cases hindered by the Chinese protocol. "If there is any nation that can match the English in their arrogance and obstinacy, it is surely the Chinese" (2011). Howard Giles, Vikki Katz, and Paul Myers in the book titled *Language Attitudes and the role*

of Community has stated that:

Our views of others, including their supposed beliefs, capabilities, and social attributes, can be determined in part by influences derived from our perceptions of their speech characteristics and language varieties. Indeed overt responses and communications to speakers as well as important social decisions regarding their prospects and welfare can be mediated by our so-called 'language attitudes. These in turn can affect our self-presentations as we attempt to shape others' reactions to us and their attributions of us. (2006)

Code mixing and Code switching can be termed as *schutnification* in the words of Salman Rushdie. People have a tendency to speak the language of the most powerful sector of the society; thereby they intend to elevate themselves in social status. *Sea of Poppies* is a multilingual and multidialectal novel and code mixing is rampant throughout the novel. Bhojpuri, Bengali, English, French are the languages that are code mixed and code switched. The language of the crew members of the ship is quintessential of code mixing and also switching of languages. English readers would find this novel trying their patience as code mixing hinders the comprehensibility of the novel. Every crew member mixes his mother tongue with English in order to communicate.

'Malum Zikri! Captain-bugger blongi poo-shoo-foo. He hab got plenty sick! Need one piecedokto. No one can chow-chowtiffin. Allotimdochheechee, pee-pee. Plenty smelli in Captin cabin.' (Ghosh, 2008)

In *The River of Smoke*, the inmates of the ships carrying opium who anchor at Hong Kong create a new world for themselves. "Even though the majority of Hong Kong Chinese are native speakers of Cantonese, English has always played an important role in the government, education and employment" (Luke, 1982). Language and food adaptations are the major step they take when they accept change. Chai becomes the favourite drink and samosa, the most treasured snack. Butto Neel, the sound of the unfamiliar words is just as tasteful as the items that bore their names. "He found that he was constantly learning new words from others in Bahram's entourage: some, like *cha* came from Cantonese, while others brought it from the Portuguese by *Vico*—like 'falto' for example, meaning fraudulent or false which became phaltry on *Schha* tongues" (Ghosh, 2011). Bharam Modi's extramarital relationship with Chi-mei is also aided by *lob-pidgin* and that proves how the man - woman relationship crosses all lingual barriers.

The colonizers were successfully making the colonies believe that they were the best refined nation with the best sophisticated culture. As a result, the elite started adapting the culture of the Whites to portray themselves as a superior race. Arjun in *The Glass Palace* who endeavours to join the group of true modern Indians adopt every possible way of imitating the West. At Howrah station, while Dinu and Arjun meet, Dinu notices an unbelievable change in Arjun. From a drowsy person, he has changed a lot especially his patterns of speech have undergone a noticeable difference. His speech consists mainly of jargons with a mix of English and Punjabi slang and everyone is "either a 'chap' or a 'yaar'" (Ghosh, 2000).

Predominance of English in various parts of the world reiterates Antonio Gramsci's concept of hegemony. "Through human history, the fate of languages has been closely linked to political power relationships. Political shifts in the international system continue to affect linguistic patterns, which today are still in a state of flux following the end of the Cold War" (Maurais, 2004). People have a tendency or rather are left with no other choice other than surrendering their individuality in favour of power, authority and financial superiority. Colonization of the powerless countries and the subsequent subservience exhibited by the colonized are good examples of the influence of power. The tendency to follow the policies of the powerful sector by the less privileged results in identity-based complexities which get manifested in various forms. Accepting a foreign tongue and trying to reproduce it is also a form of subservience to the power.

The popularity of English in other countries is an example of how power can goad people to accept lingual shift. English is the lingua franca in many third world countries and this validates the influence of power in other nations. The education system in India lays emphasis on English language learning, which is chiefly because of powerful position held by the U.S.A. Moreover, in a multi-lingual country like India people find the existence of lingua franca a convenient tool for communication. There are several instances in Ghosh's novels where language becomes a bridging force between people of different nations whereas for the Zamindar of Rashkali, Raja Neel Rattan the ability to comprehend and reciprocate the language of the colonists abets to his plight inside the prison. He is frowned upon by the English while he speaks English. The captivity of Neel and the humiliation he faces whenever he utters English testify the theory of Homi. K. Bhabha of mimicry and hybridity. Mimicry in colonial and postcolonial literature is most commonly seen when members of a colonized society (say, Indians or Africans) imitate the language, dress, politics, or cultural attitude of their colonizers (say, the British or the French). In the novel *Sea of Poppies*, the author portrays Neel as a person who has mastered the tongue of his master. However, the driving force behind every act of mimicry is association with people of another race.

The old Raja had always got on well with Englishmen, even though he spoke their language imperfectly and had no interest at all in their books. As if to compensate his own limitations, the Raja had hired a British tutor for his son, to make sure that he had a thorough schooling in English. Neel was little fitted for the company of such means, Mr. Burnham and they in turn tended to regard him with a dislike that bordered on contempt. (Ghosh, 2008)

This contempt prevails throughout the novel where the Britishers find it difficult to stomach the reality of Neel speaking their language and his familiarity with their literature. Soon after the regular strip search of Neel, he

questions the jailor in English for which he faces severe abuse. "The man's eyes flared and Neel saw that he had nettled him, simply by virtue of addressing him in his own tongue..... an intolerable insolence in an Indian convict, a definition of the language" (Ghosh, 2008).

The Whites not only disliked the idea of natives mastering English but also feared the consequences of the Whites going native. They considered themselves to be the only civilized race in the globe and hence the cultures of other nations were averted. As Mr. Doughty tells Zachary, "Mind your Oordoo and Hindee doesn't sound too good: don't want the world to think you've gone native" (Ghosh, 2008). There is a curious version of this fear in the native's mind too. It is best exemplified in the pressure built upon the Europeans regarding the behaviour address code they were expected to observe without any margin for deviation. The white man had to shoulder his sacred burden. It was a sacrifice that he had to make. He had to colonize, control, exploit, tyrannize and even kill the black/brown/yellow peoples of the world, in order to civilize them. The white man's arrogance is reflected unconsciously in the smallest of things. During Neel's trial, the judge declared that India had been "opened to the benefit of civilization... [the Englishmen were] chosen to burden with the welfare of such races as were still in the infancy of civilization" (Ghosh, 2000).

2.3. Cultural Hybridity in Religion

Every nation with a profound legacy, treasures its myth, folklore, customs and practices. "Sundarban represents a society that is primarily agricultural. The people live in villages adjoining forests which are the home of Tiger. For survival, these people have to fight with the nature day in and day out. The hardships of daily existence have given rise to fraternal feelings and non-communal traditions. Members of both Hindu and Muslim communities worship the same Gods and Goddesses, Gazis and Pirs" (Basu, 2006). The folklore of Bonbibi in *The Hungry Tide* is a good example of how faith and belief in this Goddess provides the exemplary courage to sustain in a land where the people of the land wake up to the roars of the Tigers. Banbibi (the lady of the forest), also Bandevi, Bandurga and Byaghradevi is a guardian spirit of the forests venerated by both the Hindu and the Muslim residents of the Sundarbans (spread across West Bengal state in eastern India and Bangladesh). She is called upon mostly by the honey-collectors and the woodcutters before entering the forest for protection against the attacks from the tigers. It is believed that the demon king, Dakkhin Rai (the lord of the south), an arch-enemy of Banbibi actually appears in the disguise of a tiger and attacks human beings. In "River of Fire", Qurratul Hyder mentions in footnoted that "Ban-Bibi" is Fatima, daughter of Prophet Muhammad and she is revered as the patroness of the woods by the forest-dwelling Muslims of Bengal (Wikipedia contributors).

The faith in this Goddess is the factor that confirms the commonality among the people in the Tiger-infested coastal region. "Piya stood by and watched as Fokir and Tutul performed a little ceremony. First they fetched some leaves and flowers... then standing before the shrine Fokir began to recite some kind of chant... Piya recognized a refrain that occurred over and over again... 'Allah'" (Ghosh, 2004). Piya is confused to hear a Muslim chant combined with Hindu *Puja* practice. Nirmal is surprised at the events that take place at the shrine. The shrine is nothing but a raised platform with bamboo sides and a thatched covering. They place the images of Bonbibi and Shah Jongoli and Kusum lights fragrant dhoop and Fokir brings some leaves and flowers and leaves them at their feet. Followed by this Horen starts to recite a mantra in the following words.

Bismillah boliyamukheydhorinukalam/poidakorilojinnitamalam*baromeherbantini Bandarupore*taarchhanikeba acheduniyarupore*

(In Allah's name, I begin to pronounce the Word / Of the whole universe, He is the Begetter the Lord* To all His disciples, He is full of mercy/Above the created world, who is there but He*). (Ghosh, 2004)

Nirmal has been thinking that he is going to attend a Hindu *Puja* and all that he hears at the shrine is Arabic invocations with rhythm of the recitation of a Hindu *Puja*. The language he hears is not chaste Arabic either, it is a blend of Bangla, deeply interpenetrated by Arabic and Persian. The narrative is just the story of BonBibi's encounter with the demon Dokkin Rai. This style of recitation is passed mouth to mouth from one generation to the next and Horen hands over a book in which the recitation is printed. The title of the book is 'Bon Bibir Karamoti or that BonBibi Johuranama' (The Miracles of BonBibi or the narrative of Her Glory). Opening the book elevates his surprise as the pages open to the right as in Arabic not like Bangla. The author of the book is a Muslim named Abdur-Rahim. It is pretty obvious that settlers have come in numbers to make a living and to all of them Bon Bibi has served as the protecting deity from the dangers of forest and tigers.

In *The River of Smoke*, Ghosh provides interesting facts about the deities and the guardian spirit of Canton. One day Zadig Bey using his spyglass introduces George Chinnery to the major landmarks in Canton. Chinnery learns that the streets and lanes in Canton carry the reminders of Aliens. "'Why,' he said, 'even the city's guardian deity is a foreigner—an Achhain fact'" (Ghosh, 2011)! He couldn't believe that 'Canton's tutelary spirit' is a woman who was a sari clad woman once. There is a place which was once occupied by Buddhists from Hindusthan and a Kashmiri monk named Dharamysa is famous among them. Down by the river is located a temple that was founded by of the

famous Buddhist missionaries — the Bodhidharma, a native of Madras.

It is even more surprising to learn that the city also has one of the oldest temples in the whole world built in the lifetime of Prophet Mohammad. “It is a most remarkable structure, no different, in outward appearance, from a Chinese temple — all except for the minaret, which is like that of any dargah in Bengal” (Ghosh, 2011)! Even people

who get converted from one religion to another carry some of the traits of their original culture and in such a way modifications creep gradually and become a part of custom later part of the time.

3. Conclusion

All the above-mentioned examples and incidents validate Jung's theories on archetype, as every character in his novel represents a sect and their actions and behaviour substantiate their collective unconscious. The recurring patterns of the workings of the unconscious mind in humanity at moments of crises and other such circumstances endorse each of these characters to be the prototypes of their society. All these characters belong to varied nationalities and yet their reticence to accept defiance in their conventional lifestyle remains the same. On the other hand, culture has undergone unfathomable changes where mind and thoughts against a lion's share in the process of change. Although humans find differences unpalatable there are few psychological components that make differences desirable and palatable. Amitav Ghosh in his novel has made considerable contribution to the study of culture and changes in culture. He has used the imaginary characters as well as imaginary situations along with real life characters and situations to depict the formation and changes in cultural patterns. The changes in cultural patterns have taken place chiefly because of the meeting of cultures and the desire to establish sociability with the people of different culture.

4. Recommendations

Based on the study, it is identified that cultural factors are always open to changes and it shall remain to be a never-ending process. This study chiefly focuses on the works of Amitav Ghosh. The same novels can be studied for the psychological implications of cultural changes. Similarly, novels of other authors can be studied employing the theories of George Simmel. A case-study can also be conducted to understand to what extent culture has undergone changes in the society. All such studies will prove to be beneficial in understanding the nuisances of cultural changes.

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