

A Recreation Mechanism for Refugee Memories to Get through the Betrayal and Trauma in *The Hungry Tides* by Amitav Ghosh

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Abstract

Mental stress is an inevitable part in the life of a refugee, especially when they have to struggle through many political oppression, war, and migration. Refugees are the individuals who are forced to leave their land because of extremely disturbing external factors. Refugees go through all the struggles in the hope of having a better life, which they may not have in their homeland. This would lead to mental and physical torture as they have to go through traumatic experiences while being an immigrant like loss of property, livelihood, malnutrition, identity crisis etc. The way of recalling the past events through one's perspective is memory. Memory is also a way of remembering the painful past, which could be the cause of preventing oneself from healing the trauma. This research will look at how memory or recalling the past is used as a tool to understand the mental stress of the refugees. This research will analyse the novel "*The Hungry Tides*" by Amitav Ghosh to see the use of memory and will also try to understand whether recalling painful events is a way to cope with the past and how the memory of a person can be manipulated to manage past trauma. Through textual analysis of the novel, the researcher uses the theory of betrayal trauma and the Pavilion method of fear extinction to help in understanding the usage of memory to change the trauma of a person. The article will show how memory can be manipulated by forgetting and recreating the events in a way so that the refugees can be relieved from their stressful situations and traumatic events.

Keywords: Memory, Refugee, Trauma, Migration, Betrayal trauma, Fear extinction

1. Introduction

Cultural memory is a concept that analyses all the biological, psychological and the social processes which are related to the past, present and future in the context of socioculturalism. Memory studies are not only about recalling the past events, but they also deal with remembering and forgetting, as we may tend to forget certain aspects of the events even though we have gone through it. This has both an individual and a collective side, yet they are inextricably linked. We can engage with memory studies through different methods like intertextuality, where memory can help in defining the cultural heritage, and narrative relations.

The narration of the past painful events will enable the audience to understand the trauma that they have been through. An autobiography like *The Diary of a Young Girl* by Anne Frank is one of the best examples to show how an autobiography, which narrates the memory of the young girls, helps in knowing the cultural heritage of the people who have been through the holocaust. This shows how the narration of memory can have an effect on the readers; it also gives an insight into the horrific past. A French sociologist, Halbwachs thinks history as "a dead memory, a way of preserving pasts to which we no longer have an organic experiential relation" and ascertain that "this understanding of the distinction negates the self-image of historiography as the more important or appropriate attitude towards the past: History's epistemological claim is devalued in favour of memory's meaningfulness".

"However, as historiography has broadened its focus from the official to the social and cultural, memory has become more central, as it frequently depends on history. Halbwachs distinguished between autobiographical memory – memory of those events we ourselves experience; historical memory – memory that reaches us only through historical records; history – as the remembered past which is no longer important to our lives; and collective memory – the active past that forms our identities. Moreover, Halbwachs characterised shared memories as effective markers of social differentiation but some critics were uncomfortable with this notion of collective consciousness disconnected from the individual, and prefer to use other terms." (Bosch, 2016, p.3).

1.1 Memory and Trauma

Memories are one of the important aspects of a huge process of negotiating culture where it is defined as narratives and flexible, filtered cultural and personal marks of the forgotten. The idea collective memory is based on the idea that all social groups produce a memory of its history in order to preserve and convey their self-image. Collective memory is a representation of the past that is created and negotiated by evolving socio-political power relations and objectives. To reconcile the past and present, remembering is an ongoing

process. What is at issue here is the significance of the past in terms of the current events; memories are crucial because they clearly communicate our shifting sense of who we are and who we were to one another. Tragic memories that are formed as a community can cause trauma which can also affect the future generation.

“Building a sense of community through a shared past, sites of memory can also mark the ongoing social legacy of exceptional moments of collective trauma. Occupation, terrorism and genocide have all been commemorated through the creation of hallowed spaces that communicate a meaning so influential that knowledge of such events has been deemed worthy of noting for the sake of posterity. Marianne Hirsch has gone as far as to argue that traumatic events like the Holocaust can be reproduced across generations, thus causing a lasting imprint in the social and cultural consciousness of entire groups” (Ranger & Ranger, 2022).

The information processing systems, social beliefs, and trauma-related coping mechanisms have been the focus of cognitive treatments to PTSD. According to a well-known set of cognitive theories, traumatic experiences violate people's fundamental beliefs about their own safety, control, and survival. As a result, people become more vulnerable, less confident in their ability to deal with challenges in life, and more open to the idea that people are inherently evil. The intensity of the violation (but maybe not to the extent of the trauma) affects how much these beliefs alter, and as the severity of the violation grows, there is a higher risk that the beliefs will be overgeneralised to inappropriate contexts.

Situational accessible memories, on the other hand, are unconscious, not within the person's control, and not immediately accessible for reflection or recollection. They may be applied to the way that dread as well as negative feelings are connected to signals that were present during a traumatic incident, as well as how those feelings are later evoked by coming into touch with reminder cues in nontraumatic situations. The dual representation theory suggests that parallel distributed processing and models for schematic emotional memories are feasible options, even if it does not specify how situational accessible memories should be represented.

Memories that can be accessed during a particular circumstance works to store, arrange, and handle data in the same way as schematic memories do. Additionally, despite the fact that these memory structures are unconsciously biased, there is growing scientific proof from data processing paradigms that they can actively direct attention towards risk-related environmental stimuli.

1.2 Refugees and Trauma

According to the 1951 Refugee Convention, a refugee is “someone who is unable or unwilling to return to their country of origin owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion.” The requirement for refugee status is the perception of upcoming hostility, but for many, this is based on prior ill-treatment, particularly painful experiences. With refugees, mental health issues are quite common. “Of refugees resettled in Western countries, a systematic review found that almost one in ten were experiencing symptoms consistent with PTSD and one in twenty with depression.”(Graham, Herlihy and Brewin, 2014, p.375). (George, 2013) mentions that throughout the migratory phase, migrants frequently transition between several nations and refugee camps. At this point, individuals are often cut off from their friends and family, which causes them to feel extremely depressed and anxious as they realise everything they have lost. Refugees' lives continue to be in turmoil until their legal issues are resolved. Refugees are forced to face their losses and build new visions on the future during this portion of time. Refugees are initially facing the disappearance of their heritage, which includes their identity, custom, and locality. Every move that was formerly ordinary will need to be carefully examined and taken into account. Those who did not plan, intend, or prepare for their escape and were instead swept up in fear, frenzy, or even adventure will be disproportionately affected by culture shock. Refugees' fear and feelings of alienation from their host country significantly grow when they discover the challenging reality of settlement services. Even if they are afraid of the violent repercussions, Many refugees might want to go back to where they came from due to the extreme levels of nostalgia, loneliness, sadness, anxiety, guilt, wrath, and frustration. These elements often lead to a rise in psychological issues.

Unlike to traumatisations that occur at random, trauma brought on by another person always targets a particular social actor. This social actor might be a person, a social organisation or a collection of people that can be held in many methods accountable for the suffering of the impacted. Consequently, externally induced pain is the only thing that may produce trauma. For this reason, people who have symptoms brought on by traumas caused by humans are usually referred to as victims in addition to being distressed. Being referred to be a victim involves admitting that you have experienced moral injustice. Due to the fact that a serious traumatisations can only occur if the social compact that already exists, which forbids harming others, is breached, these victims are thus not just the victims of an offender and sufferers of society as a whole. A member of the community becomes helpless as a consequence of an awful occurrence and is at the pity of a different member of the community if the laws of morality and personal development are violated. Thus, if this agreement is violated, it is not merely the obligation of the state and society to cope with the breach; it is also always a part of the victim's violent and helpless condition. Repression, dissociation, and denial act as a rudimentary kind of defense for these emotions. Social trauma makes it clear that we must face not just death but also all the outrageous and horrible things people do to one another.

“Basic super- ego requirements are violated, because the society we live in makes those disruptions possible. Therefore, the witness of a traumatic event is interwoven with the situation and consequently has feelings of guilt, which are equally repelled. This would dramatically change the way trauma is perceived.” (Marcus Kumpfmüller, 2018: p.20).

While traveling and once they arrive, refugees experience social trauma. Refugees' predicament is complicated because they may experience many types of trauma once they get there while still trying to prevent the trauma in their countries of origin. Present nosology covers particular physiological and psychological reactions to trauma, but it does not emphasise existential problems, issues of guilt, and

rage, which may be of the utmost importance to many trauma survivors. The experience of severe pain is loaded with societal and personal values. There are particular meanings associated with accidents, catastrophes, domestic abuse, political violence, torture, forced migration, war, and genocide that affect their mental clinical manifestation, societal repercussions, as well as the processes of recovery or restitution.

2. Literature Review

Joseph Varghese and Vani Maria, Jose article on “Voices Doomed in the Abyss of Trauma: Discussing Amitav Ghosh's *The Hungry Tide*” (2021) says that the trauma theory is frequently linked to the agonising and eerie life experiences of Nazi Holocaust survivors. This article explores how trauma functions from the viewpoints of the individual as well as the community in Amitav Ghosh's 2004 novel “*The Hungry Tide*”. The following queries are raised by the paper: How can displacement cause trauma in people that lasts a lifetime? Does the language constrain horrific stories? Does trauma change the past and the present? The study analyses the novel's examples in an effort to provide answers to all of these essential questions. The characters of the novel went through a lot of repercussions as they were displaced from one place to another, which has given a horrific experience to them. Furthermore in Amrita Ghosh's “Refugees as Homo Sacers: Partition and the National Imaginary in *The Hungry Tide*” (2016) gave a variety of viewpoints on the lingering effects of the Indian partition in 1947, just before the country gained independence from the British Empire. Over 10 million people were uprooted and a million people died as a result of the Partition. The survivors, their children, and grandkids are still plagued by the trauma of the savage violence and displacement. Revisiting India's Partition, published over 70 years after this catastrophic event, examines the impacts of the “Long Partition,” a notion created by Vazira Zamindar to highlight the aftereffects of the 1947 Partition. Amitav Ghosh uses his creative imagination to tell brief tales of ordinary people by artistically offering a glimpse of the memories and lives of everyday people. Samiran George Ghissing's “The Storm of History: Memory, Witnessing and Archiving Betrayal in Amitav Ghosh's *The Hungry Tide* and Sunil Gangopadhyay's *Arjun*” (2015) discusses that there is an entire literary genre dedicated to the partition of India, as well as a scholarly conversation around it. However, the literary discourse on the Bengal encounter of the splitting and its associated “refugee problem” is generally lacking. This study examines the role of literature in preserving the intimate details of the marginalised refugee characters' exile, moving, and utmost perfidy using Walter Benjamin's notions of ancient consumerism, memory studies, and witness. *The Hungry Tide* (2004) by Amitav Ghosh and *Arjun* (1971) by Sunil Gangopadhyay, as well as the ethics surrounding these fictional testimonies, are critically analysed in this article to outline the waves of refugee exodus and to make the case that these books provide us with a subaltern narrative to uncover the hidden truth of life as a refugee, state indifference, and the Morichjhapi massacre.

The author of the novel tried to show the injustice that happened in the region of Bengal's Sundarban which gives a more detailed narration. Terri Tomsky's “Amitav Ghosh's Anxious Witnessing and the Ethics of Action in *The Hungry Tide*”(2009) examines the difficulties encountered by cosmopolitans trying to make a morally-sound contribution in a subaltern setting, with a particular emphasis on Amitav Ghosh's book “*The Hungry Tide*”. By illustrating an interaction within aristocrat characters and the awful history of those who reside in the Bengal's Sundarbans region, author makes the argument that a cosmopolitanism that has not been transformed is incapable of posting social injustices and must undergo a transformation in order to bring about any positive change. This article defines emotion as the motivating factor behind that critical change, a surplus that surpasses personal witnessing and affects a massive audience of authors and readers. In the article “Nation” Within the Nation: Revisiting the Failed Revolution of Morichjhapi in Amitav Ghosh's *The Hungry Tide*” (2011) by Omendra Kumar Singh speaks about the 1979 Morichjhapi catastrophe, in which tens of thousands of refugees died in West Bengal, is not included in the scribal archives. The pain that the Indian people experienced during the split just thirty years prior has hardly been fully recovered. In the collective psyche of Indians, the memories of gruesome violence are widespread, physical as well as emotional, and human dislocations are still fresh. In the novel, when Nirmal's former friend turned writer mocks the refugee issue and laughs “in the cynical way of those who, having never believed in the ideals they once professed, imagine that no one else had done so,” *The Hungry Tide*'s Kolkata intellectuals' contemptuous attitude toward the Morichjhapi refugee problem is revealed. This article also talked about how the officials are also neglecting the refugees leaving them in their pain. Environmentalists and wildlife protectors tried to protect the land but none of them came out in support of the Morichjhapi refugees' settling down in the same area. In Madhu Singh's “No Place to Call Home: Representation of Forced Migration and Exile in South Asian Literature”(2013), this study addresses home and homelessness in the unique context of geopolitical changes in the Indian Subcontinent since they are strongly embedded in cultural, social, technological, and economic aspects of contemporary society. It examines how the communities of compelled migrants deal with the “condition of terminal loss,” negotiate their identity in the face of class conflict and host-country politics, and examine any techniques used to win acceptance and legitimacy. The Morichjhapi Massacre of 1979, one of the most savage murders in the history of refugee rehabilitation in India, is one of the lesser-known but crucial occurrences under the Left Front government of West Bengal that is highlighted in Amitav Ghosh's widely read novel *The Hungry Tide* (2005). As a result of their persecution in the former East Bengal, Dalits fled to India, where the Indian government was unable to provide a safe “home” for them. This article shows how the lives of refugees are neglected by the authoritative agencies.

Priya Kumar's “Testimonies of loss and memory Partition and the haunting of a nation” (2006) talks about “the basic foundation of the postcolonial Indian state is “the partition of the Indian subcontinent”, but histories of the Indian country are frequently characterised by their refusal to accept or claim this traumatic past. This essay explores three post-partition ‘testimonies’ that attest to the enduring effects of partition in our world: “Amitav Ghosh's *The Shadow Lines*, Qurratulain Hyder's *Sita Haran*, and Shyam Benegal's film *Mammo*”. All three works speak to feelings brought on by various losses, including the loss of a place to call home, a loved one, or a more harmonious

background. In addition to being essential to our comprehension of separation as an event that cannot be fixed in time, these "testimonies of loss and memory" also enable us to consider the accomplishments and shortcomings of nation sovereignty. In the article "The postcolonial Uncanny; The Politics of Dispossession in Amita Ghosh *The Tide Hungry*" (2010) by Pramod K Nayar talks about how in postcolonial India, with its colonial past and ongoing demands for social justice from the dispossessed, the Dalits, the minorities, and women, refugees are "created." Morichjhapi's spectral refugee serves as a symbol of the postcolonial state's inability to create a secure "home," since Dalits, minorities, and other oppressed people live in a "unhomely" environment. Indeed, Dalits make up a large portion of the refugees in the Sunderbans. They are "unhomely" not only in the sense that they are "out of place," without a place on the land or in history, but also in the sense that the land itself is "unhomely," due to its unfriendliness.

"Memory, truth and victimhood in post-trauma societies" (2016) by John D Brewer mentions that in order to evaluate the significance of memory as a peace strategy, it is important first to shift the attention to the post-violence setting and highlight the crucial role of memory in national and communal conflicts. This calls for consideration of ancillary themes like victimhood and truth recovery as fresh social science aspects and their potential as therapeutic approaches in post-trauma cultures. At the same time, a study on "Over general memory in asylum seekers and refugees" (2014) by Belinda et al. shows that the participants with PTSD and depression remembered a lower percentage of particular recollections after controlling for omissions. Additionally, those with PTSD typically failed to recall any memories.

In the essay by Ellen Morris "Writing Trauma: Ipuwer and the Curation of Cultural Memory" (2020) aims to talk about the series of events that happen during famine to focus on trauma and social memories. This essay talks about how all the societal traumas may be forgotten, but these are the learnt lessons that are valuable. Here the focus is given on how this could be useful either during or after a time of social unrest as it helps to preserve traumatic memories and try to stop similar things from happening again. "Memory for traumatic events" (1987) by Sven-Åke Christianson, and Elizabeth F. Loftus compares the retention of traumatic and non-traumatic versions of the same event. The findings of the article imply that while memory is degraded for many specific, and particularly peripheral, elements, some information (the substance, the theme) of a traumatic event may be rather well remembered. A similar study on "Comparisons of memories for traumatic events and other experiences" (2001) by Christina A. Byrne, Ira E. Hyman Jr, Kaia L. Scott compared and contrasted the memory evaluations for traumatic, adverse, and rewarding life situations. The results of this study generally lend support to theoretical viewpoints that emphasize how memory for traumatic situations is more constrained than memory for other experiences. Anuparna Mukherjee's article "River and Memories: Migration, Ecology and Landscape in The Narratives of India's Partition" (2023) shows that in addition to embodying one of the most significant places of mourning, the creative literature that emerged from the event of India's Partition in 1947, which led to the uprooting of nearly twelve million people across borders, also examines the varied reactions to the violence through spatial memories linked to trauma and nostalgia. In contrast to the cramped refugee ghettos that severely disrupted the daily rituals that gave shape and meaning to home, nostalgia became a cardinal effect underpinning migrant narratives and aesthetics, replete with allusions to the life of abundance amidst the natural environment in the former home(land). "FUGITIVE SOVEREIGNTIES IN AMITAV GHOSH'S *IBIS* TRILOGY Deconstructing the "Unparalleled Catastrophe" of the Human" (2021) by Mina Karavanta says that in order to reveal the traumas of the colonised as symptoms of the protraction, deferral, and repetition of the "coloniality of being," this takes the form of a rhizomatic narration, whose center is deferred each time the specific viewpoints of the dispossessed, the migrants, and their collectivities enter the narrative.

The literature review shows how it is essential to address trauma and to talk about the horrific life experiences of being a refugee. The trauma of the refugees are being discussed here by analysing the suffering that refugees have to go through during the Morichjhapi massacre through the narration of the memory of the past by the author of the novel. These articles show how memory can show the reality of a refugee's life and also try to show how memory and testimonies help in understanding the achievements and flaws of the nation. This article portrays how memory can be used in different ways to make a change in the effects of traumatic events. This paper tries to portray how memory can be used or manipulated in a way to change the perception of a traumatic past. Here, the paper tries to show how memory can be used as a tool to change or to move on from a traumatic past of a refugee.

3. Methodology

The paper foregrounds the qualitative study of the novel *The hungry tides*. This study looks at the memory of the characters to understand the traumatic experience of the refugees and their surroundings. Through understanding memory, this research looks at how memory is altered to cope with the traumatic struggles. In this paper, textual analysis will be used to analyse the text and will make use of the approach, content analyses to understand the usage of memory to analyse the memory and trauma of refugees. To analyse the text through the memory around the refugees, here the betrayal trauma theory and fear extinction is used.

The term "betrayal trauma" is to describe a certain type of trauma, regardless of how the trauma is experienced. Freyd (2008) says, "Betrayal trauma happens when the people or organisation that a person depends on for survival badly betrays that person's trust or well-being. Childhood physical, emotional, or sexual abuse by a caretaker is an example of betrayal trauma. "This theory states that the processing and memory of a bad experience will depend on how much it reflects a betrayal by a very significant, trusted third party. Institutional betrayal and blind betrayal The unawareness, ignorance, and forgetfulness people display towards treachery is known as betrayal blindness. According to the Betrayal Trauma Theory, the phrase "betrayal blindness" was first used by Freyd in 1996 and further developed by him in 1999 and 2013 along with Birrell. This blindness may encompass betrayals that aren't often thought of as "traumas," such as adultery, unfair labour and social practices, etc. To protect the relationships, institutions, and social systems they depend on,

victims, offenders, and witnesses may exhibit betrayal blindness. The phrase "Institutional Betrayal" refers to wrongdoings performed by institutions against those who depend on them, including failing to stop or assist those who conduct wrongdoings (such as sexual assault) while acting within the institutional setting. The central theme of Freyd and Birrell's 2013 novel *Blind* to treachery is institutional treachery.

The Pavlovian method of "fear extinction" is another strategy. The unpleasant occurrence is brought to mind while recalling a scary encounter in a secure environment, but it is clear that the dreadful incident doesn't happen again. A new memory of being protected from the unpleasant event arises. The individual will learn to overcome their fear if they perform this safe-recall exercise frequently. Although reconsolidation and extinction are entirely different processes, therapies that promote extinction are also therapeutically appealing. Promoting extinction seeks to provide the patient fresh memories that will help them get over their anxiety, whilst interfering with reconsolidation aims to break the linkages to the trauma. Clinical therapies for phobias and obsessive-compulsive disorders employ extinction. Extinction treatment does have one disadvantage, though, in that the impact normally wears off over time and the original conduct returns. Through these theories, this paper will analyse how betrayal from an institution can affect the mental health of vulnerable people. This theory would be used to understand how memory can be manipulated to break oneself from the trauma so as to come out of the traumatic past.

4. Discussion

Identification is built on one's perception of membership in many socially defined groups, positions, and statuses that are woven into a biographical narrative. Identification is withheld from involvement in an in-group and defined against the backdrop of those perceived as "other." These group borders and identifications may be intensified by violent conflict situations and even lone traumatic occurrences, making culturally formed conceptions of gender, race, ethnicity, and religion more apparent. Trauma frequently affects a person's sense of identity. The intense experience of life-threatening violence may cause derealisation and depersonalisation, which may then prompt efforts to reinforce identity through signs and symbols that are specific to a particular culture. Cultural identities may also be connected to communal trauma since they may make a person a target for violence and then recast them as a victim, bystander, or perpetrator, depending on the political situation. Trauma's aftermath is a challenging problem. The Individual and social issues with redefining identity in ethically acceptable ways, uphold an individual's self-esteem and self-efficacy.

4.1 *Betrayal, a Cause for Trauma*

West Bengal had a significant inflow of refugees from East Pakistan and later Bangladesh as a result of the Partition of Bengal. Bengali Hindus invaded West Bengal from 1950s to 1970s, continuing this outflow as they sought permanent residence there. Nonetheless, they were placed in various locations outside of West Bengal with the understanding that they would soon be transferred. These refugees eventually moved back from those evacuation centers to Marichjhapi, one of the farthest-northern forested islands in the Sundarbans, after being cruelly expelled for violating the Forest Acts, which were put in place to protect the mangrove forests, in 1978. Officially, the government's first priority was to maintain the Sundarbans' ecological balance. The Sundarbans islanders viewed "the Marichjhapi massacre", which violently killed hundreds of migrants, as a betrayal.

"Every year, dozens of people perish in the embrace of that dense foliage, killed by tigers, snakes and crocodiles."(Ghosh,2004,p.20). Due to their shared East Bengali ancestry, the residents of the Sundarbans Islands supported the migrants from the start. Furthermore, they could relate to the awful struggles the pioneers had faced. The *Hungry Tide* by Amitav Ghosh recreates the historical event mentioned above. Like many others at that point, the veteran Communist Nirmal believed that the harsh expulsion of refugees was a betrayal of his core socialist beliefs. His account of the carnage is included in his journal. The tale of Morichjhapi takes front stage in the book as the final important manifestation of the anguish of the division of Bengal. "Ghosh himself speaks of his fascination with history, highlighting the point that one of the very important things in a text is that it becomes a place where those cultural interactions are performed in the most difficult possible ways."(Pulugurtha, 2010, p.2).

"Some refugees had occupied one of the islands in the forest, Nilima said. There was a confrontation with the authorities that resulted in a lot of violence. The government wanted to force the refugees to return to their resettlement camp in central India. They were being put into trucks and buses and taken away."(Ghosh, 2004,p.49).

This demonstrates how the government handled the island-based refugees. As they were forced to go on their own, their experiences of hardship and violence would have had an impact on their mental health. They are once again mistreated by using violence against them by the government and making them move to a different location. The memory of Nilima shows how the authority who is in charge of taking after the people is forcing them to leave their own land. The government is an authoritative system that has the power given by the people for their upliftment but here the same authority is betraying the people and forcing them to leave the island in a brutal way as they are loaded into a truck and driven off just like how animals are taken.

Details concerning the tragic Morichjhapi episode, in which millions of homeless refugees attempted to settle on one of the Sundarbans' deserted islands but were forcibly removed in the interest of conservation by the government, are revealed in Kanai's uncle's journal. The Partition of India and, by extension, British colonialism are to blame for the misery of the refugees. Nirmal and Kusum are sucked into the refugees' battle. It turned out that the area in central India where the refugees were relocated was very different from what they were used to. There was animosity among the refugees as they were relocated to a place and among people who spoke a different language and had a different culture. They managed to get by with all of that for a while before arriving in the Sundarbans in 1978 with the intention of

staying in Marichjhapi. Nilima claimed it was a resettlement programme, while some said it was more akin to a jail or a concentration camp. Security personnel encircled them and forbade them from leaving. Those who made an attempt to flee were pursued. Coming from Nilima, who is very hesitant to become engaged with the refugees and their issues, this is a significant statement.

4.2 Recreation through Fear Extinction

Readers were given a description of the river called Matla by Amitav Ghosh which describes the drastic change that it has been through. He recalled the Matla as a large river that was among the most majestic he had ever seen. As the tide was low, the river was little broader than a ditch in the distance and was running down the middle of a half-mile-wide bed. Freshly created silt dunes of melted chocolate shimmered in the sunlight along the water's edge. Air bubbles would occasionally rise from the bottom and break through to the surface, producing the burnished surface's circles. They created sounds that nearly appeared to form articulate patterns, as though they were the voice of the earth's interior. While Kanai and Nilima was crossing the river he got a vivid memory of Nirmal. "The impression was heightened by his clothes and umbrella: his loose white drapes had flapped in the wind like a mantle of feathers, while the shape of his chhata was not unlike that of a long, pointed bill." (Ghosh, 2004, p.32). He talks about the encounter of Nirmal who was mentally ill during the refugee crisis, where they were forced to move to another place. "I still remember him standing here while we were waiting for a boat." (Ghosh, 2004, p.32). The memory of Nirmal being in an unstable stage has created a deep wound in her mind, which affects her even after years. She immediately tried to stop any further conversation. This shows how the image of Nirmal near the river is emotionally affecting Nilima.

"Stop, Kanai. Don't talk about it. I can't bear it. Kanai cut himself short. Is it still upsetting for you? After all these years? Nilima shivered. It's just this place — this is where he was found, you know. Right here on the embankment in Canning. He only lived another couple of months after that. He must have been out in the rain, because he caught pneumonia." (Ghosh, 2004, p.34).

Although the place that she visited has an association with her past traumatic events, she is traveling to the same place. Here by going to the same traumatic place, she tries to be engaged with others, and she also asks to stop talking about her past. She tries to create new memories rather than holding on to the same past that shatters her, thus helping her mind to erase the fear. The theory of fear extinction is used as a coping mechanism by Nilima

"Nilima raised a hand to wipe her eyes. I still remember coming here to get him," she said. "He was standing here shouting, 'The Matla will rise! The Matla will rise!' His clothes were all soiled, and there was mud on his face. I'll never get that image out of my head." (Ghosh, 2004, p.35).

People who have experienced trauma suffer from mental and physical problems that are hard to grasp and express. The pains might manifest as detached mental states, physical discomfort and other somatic dysfunctions, intense thoughts and feelings, propensities for bad conduct, interpersonal communication patterns, and methods of living. Early and later traumatisation can have impacts that can manifest in a variety of diagnostic categories, with PTSD symptoms being merely one of many such manifestations. Depression, addiction, disordered eating, personality disorders, and anxiety disorders are just a few examples of the manifestations of trauma that may be present in the context of a mental illness. "Please don't talk about it, Kanai. I can't bear to remember all that. That's why I wanted you to deal with this packet of his. I just don't have the strength to revisit all of that." (Ghosh, 2004, p.35). Avoiding memories that trigger traumatic experiences reduces PTSD. The flash of memories that she experiences whenever she hears or thinks about her husband is unbearable for her as it makes her recollect all the painful past of her life. By avoiding the conversation, she tries to keep her mind distracted so as to prevent further thoughts of the trauma which is carved in her mind. She gave all the packets related to Nirmal to Kanai as she didn't want to keep any of his assets at the same time she wanted to give justice. Nilima has given every letter of Nirmal; she didn't even try to read any of them, thinking it could bring back the old memories that she tried to bury. Emotional avoidance is a normal reaction to tragedy. The avoiding clusters of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptoms really include the avoidance cluster of emotional avoidance, which PTSD patients utilise to block off uncomfortable or unpleasant sensations.

We can see Kusum talking about her life and how she ended up in Morchippallil. She told the story of other refugees

"Once we lived in Bangladesh, in Khulna jila: we're tide country people, from the Sundarbans' edge. When the war broke out, our village was burned to ash; we crossed the border, there was nowhere else to go. We were met by the police and taken away; in buses they drove us to a settlement camp. We'd never seen such a place, such a dry emptiness; the earth was so red it seemed to be stained with blood. For those who lived there, that dust was as good as gold; they loved it just as we love our tide country mud. But no matter how we tried, we couldn't settle there: rivers ran in our heads, the tides were in our blood." (Ghosh, 2004, p.177).

This response from refugees shows how stressful and traumatic their life was. An unexpected event has caused a change of their life course; they fought against the war where their whole village is burned to ash. The refugees have lost all the life savings which was deposited on their properties there. They also had to move from their original settlement to another area so as to get the basic necessities of life like food and a peaceful environment. It is mentioned that earth is red, which shows the bloodshed they have witnessed in their native and their struggles during the forced migration.

In *The Hungry Tide*, In order to explain the particular situation of the Morichjhapi refugees, Ghosh quotes Kusum, a resident of Morichjhapi and the victim, who spoke to Nirmal during the final exchange the islander, had with the police.

“The worst part was... to sit here, helpless, with hunger gnawing at our bellies and listen to the policemen say...This island has to be saved for its trees, it has to be saved for its animals... it is a part of a reserve forest, it belongs to a project to save tigers...Who are these people, I wondered, who love animals so much that they are willing to kill us for them?” (Ghosh, 2004, p.270).

Kusum gets a trail of memories when she thinks about the land which also reminds her about the betrayal that they faced. Freyd (2008) explained that “Betrayal trauma occurs when the people or institutions on which a person depends for survival significantly violate that person’s trust or well-being”. Humans started giving importance to animals under the name of cosmopolitanism, where they forgot that their actions were the cause of the death of many people. When the human race is willing to kill the people to save animals, it shows the insensitivity of the dominant group in the society towards the refugees. This act of insensitivity will lead the refugee to feel alienated and would also think that they cannot even trust their own mankind.

“What’s most important to us at this time is to mobilise public opinion, to bring pressure on the government, to get them to leave us alone. They’re putting it out that we’re destroying this place; they want people to think we’re gangsters who’ve occupied this place by force. We need to let people know what we’re doing and why we’re here. We have to tell the world about all we’ve done and all we’ve achieved. Can you help us with this? Do you have contacts with the press in Calcutta” (Ghosh, 2004, p.181).

Vertzberger (2005) says that it permanently alters the collective memory of the group and that this alters the victims' future identities. The village residents will continue to be martyrs who battle against injustices by educating the next generation about the facts of the refugees, despite the fact that the Indian government refers to them as gangsters and anti-state operatives. Refugees were seen as gangsters, as the government and public have portrayed. This gave a negative connotation to the refugees in the memory of the people outside who don't know about their struggles. They are trying to erase the thought of refugees being a mob who occupy the land illegally. With the help of the press, they could change the thought process of the people by educating them about their socio-cultural situation. This would reach a large mass where they could express themselves, which would change the way people perceive them. The change in the thought of people could bring a relief in refugees that could help their mental state of being. This change of perception will help in fear extinction as it will help in understanding about their past and who they are so that they can establish themselves and their opinion. They are trying to change the future of refugees being called gangsters, at least by educating themselves it helps in coping with the mind and will help to understand the reality of refugees.

5. Conclusion

This paper looks at how the author represents trauma through memory and how memory is used as a tool to avoid trauma as in one of Daukšaitė's works, Susana Vega-Gonzalez observes that the “passing on of [...] forgotten stories, giving them a voice in the novel’s discourse, is the only hope for eternity and remembrance” (Daukšaitė, 2013,p.2549). In *The Hungry Tides*, we could see a lot of incidents where the memories of the characters bring their traumatic past memories “positive memories are less significant than negative memories, particularly with regard to questions of historical justice” (Davidson, 2022). Negative memories or memories that remind us about any tragic event would remain in us and haunt us throughout as trauma. This article focuses on how memories take a role in bringing back their past and, at the same time, helping them as a coping mechanism. Through this paper, the researcher tries to convey that memory can be used as a tool in helping to move on from a traumatic past. The betrayal trauma theory and the theory of fear extinction are used in this article to analyse how being betrayed by the institutions that are supposed to help them and the effects of creating new memories on the space where they experienced trauma can be used to turn horrible memories into more pleasant thoughts.

The novel *The Hungry Tides* by Amitav Ghosh talks about “the Marichjhapi massacre”, where the locals were forced to move by the government authorities. Indeed, this novel talks about the problems faced by the refugees, on their displacement, resettlement and other traumatic events. Therefore, this paper looks at the memory of the refugees and tries to understand how memory can also be helpful in forgetting and moving on from the traumatic past.

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