

*The Hungry Tide* describes how Piya was able to escape from being an acquiescent victim in the hands of the guard and his friend who constantly threatened her and at last robbed her. When Piya was about to die of drowning into the river and mud, it was Fokir who saved her from 'the Fall' and she could rely on Fokir. But when the subtextual glimpse about the experience of Piya at her falling in the mud in the chapter 'The Fall' gradually started to extend and have a new shape in the reader, it was overtaken by the author who diverts (along with Piya) the attention to the sympathetic selfless world of Fokir and his son, to Piya's juxtaposing of Mekong, Brahmaputra and the tide country river, to her research development with dolphins in the Sunderbans, to the domestic dream world of Moyna, Nilima, Nirmal and Horen, their beliefs, superstitions and myth, such as the Bonbibbi myth and their struggle for space in Morichjhapi and being massacred. But this subtextual glimpse so far suppressed and dormant in the reader suddenly flourished in the chapter 'Catching Up' intervening the subtextual domain through a world of his own-making. Piya's horrified memory of falling jostled with the present anxiety at the absence of Fokir:

She remembered her panic in falling from the launch and it made her think of the numbing horror that would accompany the awareness that you were imprisoned in a grasp from which there was no escape ...and now, with Fokir absent, the experience seemed even more frightening than it had been at the time. (Ghosh, 2006, p.194)

The textual study dealing with the present engaging Piya and Kanai in their journey with different purposes has been gradually shaped in the co-textual study of the diary. Diaries or commonplace books which has been used as a form of expression containing reminiscences, autobiographical elements, important observations, remarks, aphoristic sayings etc. has been taken up by Ghosh as a literary tool to present intimate and anecdotal events befitting the blurring between the past and the present, the *sine qua non* of the textual and the subtextual presentation in Ghosh's reading. The tune set by the already aired curiosity and suspense gets new momentum by the introduction of the diary of Nirmal and was kept alive throughout the novel. Nirmal's intention was enunciated very early in his diary:

There is nothing I can do to stop what lies ahead. But I was once a writer; perhaps I can make sure at least that what happened here leaves some trace, some hold upon the memory of the world. (Ghosh, 2006, p.69)

The subjectivity of the 'textuality of history and the historicity of text' (Montrose, 1986) has been reiterated by Ghosh who dexterously used it in the textual texture of the diary. He kept on raising the emotion towards the climax as well as visually presenting the history of a mass killing describing how 'small things become the world in microcosm' through a new historian in the disguise of Nirmal who feels:

...every moment takes on a startling clarity ...And now like some misplaced, misgendered Scheherazade, I am trying to stave the night off with a flying fleeting pen... (Ghosh, 2006, p.148)

This 'flying, fleeting pen' writes the new history, which is, in the words of Paul Hamilton, 'a concept like redemption, which works on the analogy

of the salvage of an individual irreducible both to the past ideology which has obscured it and to the process of its retrieval. The new significance of the redeemed event revises present mode of interpretation empowering them to make still further historical discoveries so that the dialectical historicity of past and present generates its own momentum' (Hamilton, 2007). Towards this dynamic equilibrium, this momentum serves as inertia that keeps the dynamism of history alive for ever. The New Historical text encompasses Nirmal's diary in which the subjectivity of the historian has been blurred with the free imaginary discourse of the novelist. The traumatic experience of the refugees in the barren lands of Dandaka has been expressed by both Nirmalendu Dhali, the then Headmaster of Netajinagar Vidyapith and Nirmal in his diary. The affinity between both the writings is noteworthy.

*Nirmalendu:* For want of water, food and medicine, there broke out within a few days a terrible epidemic. A number of people died every day. Even corpses were not burnt properly, some were left half-burnt, some taken by beasts (Bhattacharya, 2010, p.254). *Nirmal's diary:* We had never seen such a place, such a dry emptiness; the earth was so red it seemed to be stained with blood... we couldn't settle their: river ran in our head, the tides in our blood. (Ghosh, 2006, p. 254)

In that almost unlivable land, even deserted by the adivasies, those refugees managed to have somehow a tarpaulin shade as shelter with no latrine or hygiene facility. Their movement under the 'Utbastu Unnayanshil Samity' led by Bimal Chakraborty, Dhiren Dey, Nirmalendu Dhali, Rangalal Barai, Rabin Chakraborty etc. in 1970 their own right to live, have unison slogan: *Amra kara ? Bastuhara. Bastuhara Bhai Bhai, Punarbasan Banglaly Chai* (Bhattacharya, 2010, p.197), the same slogan that Nirmal heard in the novel, and concluded: Where else could you belong, except in the place you refused to leave? (Ghosh, 2006, p. 254). The Communist party of India (Marxist) continually provided voice to those refugees, protested against the then Chief Minister, Siddhartha Sankar Roy's forceful stopping of the refugees' incoming at Kharagpur Railway Station (Bhattacharya, 2010, p.104), appealed to them to come to Bengal (Jyoti Basu's speech at Bhilai in 1975). Left politicians like Ram Chatterjee, Kripasindhu Saha, Kiranmoy Nanda etc. attended the All India Refugee Conference at Mana camp in M.P. in 1974 and welcomed them in such words: "The ten crore hands of five crore people of Bengal will heartily welcome you" (Bhattacharya, 2010, p.378). When Jyoti Basu-led Left Govt. comes into power and refugees, after survey, find the island of Morichjhapi acceptable to live, a new wave of hope sets out. In the novel, Kusum and her son, Fokir mixed with them. Nirmal recollects: 'In my mind's eye I saw them walking...to plunge their hands once again in our soft, yielding tide country mud. I saw them coming, young and old, quick and halt, with their lives bundled on their heads' (Ghosh, 2006, p.165). History is retold from the point of view of a victim, Kusum, the narrative being historicized. So through the subtextual gap enters the perspectives of new historicity leading to the extracting of the narrative text from the new historical text. So the entire narrative seems to be constructed on a play of textual and subtextual interpenetration as shown in the diagram: