

**COMPARING AND CONTRASTING TWO
PROTAGONISTS: RAJU (*THE GUIDE*) AND MAJEED
(*TREE WITHOUT ROOTS*)**

**A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement
for the Masters of Arts in English Language and Literature**

Submitted By :

Sabrina Alam
ID # 2006-02-93-002
M.A. in English
East West University

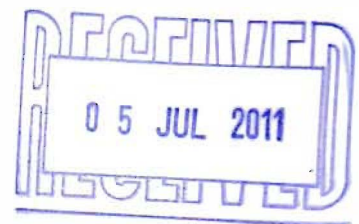
Supervisor:

Asit Roy Choudhury
Associate Professor
Department of English
East West University



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East West University
43, Mohakhali C/A,
Dhaka -1212



DECLARATION

I hereby would like to declare and confirm that this research paper “Comparing and Contrasting Two Protagonists: Raju (*The Guide*) and Majeed (*Tree Without Roots*)” was undertaken by me in partial fulfillment for M.A in English degree to be offered by the East West University (EWU).

I also declare that this dissertation is the result of my own investigation and research and no part of the material is offered in this dissertation has previously been submitted by me for a degree in the present or any other university.


Sabrina Alam

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PREFACE

R. K. Narayan is a fairly popular writer both in India and abroad. He is a writer to whom success came early. His genius as a writer was duly recognized when he was awarded the Sahitya Akademi Award for his novel *The Guide* in 1960. He is a born story teller. His novel *The Guide* tracing the growth of a corrupt tourist guide into a spiritual guide, focuses on the absurdity and illusionary quality of man's aspirations, endeavors, fame, power and money. At the same time he centered the Indian atmosphere in his novel and also reveals the India ness in human relationship. Indian religion, myths and language are also reflected in various ways in his novel. In the novel *The Guide* Raju the major character, the protagonist would play the role of a guide.

The paper focus is on the central character Raju, a simple tourist guides who become an extraordinary man under the stress of circumstances and how this major character has undergone a qualitative change in course of the novel. At the same time this paper also provide focus on another character Majeed who play major role in the novel *Tree Without Roots* the English translation of Syed Waliullahs' classic novel *Lalshalu* through which the writer portrays the superstitious Muslim society of Bangladesh and the extraordinary power of an ordinary man. It also grasped the deprivation and sadness of the people in the villages where the writer comes up with the stark fact that there was little land and too many mouths to feed.

These two protagonists Raju and Majeed are the icon of the two different societies but provide the same thoughts and impact about the two human societies. Both the writers tried to reveal the inner depth of these two protagonists in their novels and the main intention of this paper is find out the similarities and differences between these two complex central characters and to reflect more about them.



CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCING THE NOVELS



The Guide

The Guide, R.K. Narayan's most popular novel, was published in 1958. It is a juxtaposition of traditional India and modern culture against Malgudi the city of imagination. Though not philosophical, the writer creates the desired impact by painting his characters in half-tones. He views them from outside from a double standpoint. *The Guide* thus is a fine piece of art which tells of India, has characters with common traits and motives.

The novel opens this way: A former tourist guide has just been released from prison and takes shelter near an abandoned temple, where a villager named Velan mistakes him for a holy man and mentions his problem to him (Raju). The problem relates to his half-sister who ran away from home on the day fixed for her marriage, and has been brought home with great difficulty after long search. Since then, she remains confined in a room all day, and he does not know what to do with her. Raju then asks the man to bring his sister to him. The man does so the next morning, and bring food and other offerings for Raju. The girl is so impressed by Raju's personality that she apologizes to her elders and agrees to the marriage arranged by her family. This establishes Raju's fame as a holy man and Velan becomes his staunch disciple. Raju does not want to return in disgrace to his friends in Malgudi and reluctantly decides to play the part of a holy man. Raju is happy to accept the daily offering of food which the

villagers bring him. Gradually he accepts the role which has been thrust upon him, and he acts as spiritual advisor to the village community.

It can be noticed that though Raju is living in the company of the villagers, he frequently remembers his past life, the time he left behind. The village Malgudi is the name where Raju lived with his family. His father ran a small shop and Raju used to help him. After the sudden death of this father the burden of managing the shop falls on him. The shop was entrusted to a boy later and Raju becomes very popular as a guide and comes to be known as 'Railway Raju'. Many travelers who came to visit Malgudi would straightaway ask for him as because he is smart enough to give the right type of help to each tourist. While working as a tourist guide Raju meets Rosie, a beautiful dancer, and her husband, whom Raju nick-named Marco, because the man dresses in a thick jacket and helmet as if undertaking an expedition, like Marco Polo. Marco is a scholar and anthropologist, who is more interested in his research than in his young wife Rosie. Marco and Rosie engage Raju's service as a tourist guide and Raju takes them sightseeing. During this period of time Raju is charmed by the beauty of Rosie and slowly falls in love with her. Once Raju takes Rosie to see the dance of a king Cobra and finds that her body swayed rhythmically along with the movements of the cobra. Raju realises that she is a great dancer. Later he greatly pleases her by praising her dancing. Raju also takes her for sight-seeing in the town and then to a film and Rosie enjoys every moment she had spent with Raju and also started liking him slowly. They both become very close, deeply in love with each other and also spend night together. Thus Rosie becomes his mistress. When Marco discover about their love relationship he abandons Rosie and returns to Madras.

Raju becomes infatuated with Rosie and he forgets his business, falls into debt, and loses his shop at the railway station. He also loses his mother's respect because he is living with a married woman. His mother moves out of their house and the house is claimed to pay off his debts. After that Raju encourages Rosie to restart her career as a dancer and he becomes her manager and again makes money out of it. Raju spends money lavishly and is tricked by Marco and also earns a two year prison sentence.

That is the past experience of Raju's life of which he is thinking when he is declared as a holy man and he is content with the arrangement ,until a drought occurs, and to save face ,he has to take up a 12-day fast. As a great crowd gathers to watch him during his sufferings, he begins to believe in the role he has created. He has taken on an unselfish role for the first time in his life. Despite grave danger to his health, he continues to fast until he collapses. His legs sag down as he feels that the rain is falling in the hills. The ending of the novel leaves unanswered the question of whether Raju dies or survive or the drought has really ended or not and draw a sympathetic and tragic view towards the readers. Thus the novel ends on a note of ambiguity.

Raju happens to be the central character in *The Guide* by R.k. Narayan. The novel is like most of his other novels, set in Malgudi, a fictional town in southern India. The novel is told through a series of flashbacks. The story moves among idle class people and the hero is an average man who has not even completed his schooling .As usual in Narayan's novels, the career of the hero (Raju) is traced from ordinary and obscurity to prosperity and a measure of eminence, from which he is suddenly brought

down. *The Guide* is different from R.K. Narayan's other novel in the sense that the fortune of the hero once again traces an upward curve, with the hero being considered almost superhuman. At the end the hero actually becomes what people had supposed him to be, and what he himself also had been professing to be.

The Guide is thoroughly Indian, not only in its characters but also in its theme, imagery, ideas and sensibility. The typical Indian scene and situation are represented through Pyol School with its village education. The fascination of foreign tourist for the dance of a King Cobra, the drought, the fasting Swami, the multitude of merry-making pilgrims and the prevalent red-tapism, are all authentically Indian. The writer equally stresses on the family, marriage and food. The writer expresses the Indian philosophy very artistically in his novel by which one can easily get the real peculiarity of Indian characters and to accentuate the irony of fate in the mysterious life of man. His miniature India stands for the unwise and its mysteries. The theme of the novel is the ability of the ordinary man to become extraordinary under the stress of situation. The theme can also be described as the compelling force of art which shapes a person's life, for Raju, Rosie and Marco are all artists in their own way. Two of the chief themes of *The Guide* are love and marriage. The marriage of Rosie and Marco where the love is absent and later the love relationship of Raju and Rosie. Money is another theme can be found among all these relationship.

The Guide is divided into two parts; Raju's childhood, love affair, imprisonment (first part) and growth into a swami (second part). Through both the streams move concurrently the first part is set in Malgudi, Raju's past and the second part is set in Mangla, Raju's present. The use of two locals and two-times, while being a structural necessity, lends charm to the novel. In fact the two streams are so well planned that they do not cut into each other. The novel applies a photographic technique with its juxtaposition of past and present; even the two different places Malgudi and Mangla create compactness and also highlight the irony of life. It also makes Raju the hero, appear more real and sharper than the other characters. The beginning and end of the story can also be compared. The novel opens with Raju craving company, with uncertainty about the future. But, at the end he has faith in his action and though he is surrounded by thousands, he again feels abandoned. As a swami, Raju feels he is guiding the villagers but in reality he is being controlled by them. The same Raju who used to occupy the central place in Rosie's life is a helpless creature before the villagers and finally he once again occupies the central position before his death. His roles are reversed. Though in both cases, Raju becomes a public man, one role lands him in prison and the other gives him death and spiritual rebirth. In both cases, the imposter is left behind- Rosie leaves him and the saint achieves spiritual rebirth

The Guide, as the title suggests, is the story of a true guide. Whatever the situation or time, Raju the major character, the protagonist would play the role of a guide. The suggestive and apt title of the novel implies what the novel is about and thus whets our curiosity to know about the novel. Raju, the major character is born as a guide from his birth to death. He hates school and a scholar like Marco but it is ironical that he

always teaches; guides and helps other. He plays the role of a guide successfully while guides others and extricates him from difficult situation. The novel opens towards us through the character of Raju as a railway guide and ends up by portraying him as a spiritual guide. In the mean time his life made him see so much good and awful things of human life which make him an experienced man and provide courage to face the reality of human life and help him to understand the human psychology which at the end made him a swami or saint automatically .He is a born guide and is loved for his lovable genial and co-operative nature .As a guide he is a symbol of wisdom and judgment.

The technique and idea that followed up in this novel make the novel *The Guide* is complex and original and also unique in many ways.



TREE WITHOUT ROOTS:

The incident of independence of India and Pakistan from British rule bore great importance for the people of then Bengal. Since then the Bangla speaking community were divided into two parts – the East and the West Bengal. It turns into the smashing of the millennium old culture and unity of Bangali nation. Moreover the existence of language became a great question just after the creation of Pakistan. The West-Pakistan ruling government tried to impose Urdu as the principal language on the Bangali people. But the whole society reacted strongly. This leaves a permanent impression on Bangali literature. In this tumultuous era, Syed Waliullah's *Lalshalu* (1948) was published. It was the foremost successful novel, both from art and reality points of view. Later Syed Waliullah translated it in English by the name *Tree without roots*.

Tree Without Roots the English version of *Lalshalu* (Bengali version) is written by Syed Waliullah. In this Novel the writer has portrayed the traditional superstitious Muslim society of Bangla through the story of Majeed and the ancient tomb covered with a lal (red)shalu(cotton fabric). Syed Waliullah has done it in a very artistic way .From the very beginning to the end, the compactness of plot is noteworthy. The writer's narrative incurs frequent symbols that have the readers to look for a second meaning everywhere .Moreover, the novelist has used a language that Majeed uses. Thus *Tree Without Roots* has become a worthy effort in our fiction .Majeed is the protagonist of this novel and the whole story is based on him.

The story opens at a remote village in some marshy region of the country as suddenly a bearded Mullah (Majeed) arrives among the simple and unlettered Muslim

community. The setup is no different from any part of the world as long as religious superstition is concerned. The hero (Majeed) considered himself as a holy man (pir) and impressed the innocent villagers with his religious knowledge and profundity and slowly became a superhuman to the village people. The mystery of the grave, the red fabric spread over its oval shape, the glowing candles and the Quranic chants that Majeed recites besides the grave, create such an aura in among the villagers, mostly simple peasants, completely succumb to Majeed's spell. They start to bring rice and money offering to the holy shrine. The shrine over the years provides Majeed not only economic solvency but psychological domination over the community. Not satisfied with his first wife, he marries again, this time a woman who is not as amenable as his loving first wife.

There is an absolute surrender to his preaching of religion covering personal, social, moral and obviously economic lives of those people. As he comes up the scale of earning both in cash and kind, his greed for women also goes up. And only here he confronts opposition and defiance from his very young second wife Jamila. It shakes him up, yet in order to uphold his supremacy not only over her but also all of Mahabbatpur, he starts imposing sanctions on her all the more heartlessly but with little or no effect at all. Thus Majeed tastes defeat for the first time in his own family, eventually to face a far graver defeat.

His friend Khaleque, although a well-to-do man in the village contributing much to the cause of the spread of Islam especially at the command of Majeed, cannot raise his voice against him although he tries to do so rather weakly. The only time he can assert

himself and that too momentarily is when his first wife Amena is in a pathetic state caused by Majeed.

As it is, Muslims by and large are very reverential of pirs, fakirs and religious leaders. Therefore, it is no wonder that Majeed can induce fear, awe and a sense of guilt in the minds of the basically docile population of Mahabbatpur, thus leading them to feel remorseful at their ignorance of the existence of a nondescript grave containing the remains of a fictitious individual. Thus Majeed's kingdom grows bigger and his domination mightier. He plays God to all those around him and demands total supplication from them. It is not that Majeed never feels a slight pricking of conscience at selling religious falsehood. But that is most fleeting because it is primarily seen by him as his only means of earning a livelihood.

The English version of *Tree Without Roots* contains some changes. There are more detailed descriptions of the land as well as changes in the character of the protagonist Majeed and this make this novel an almost original creation, perhaps the first novel in English by a Bengali Muslim. *Tree Without Roots* is essential reading for anyone interested in knowing about Muslim Bengal and the impact of religion and superstition on the rural populace.

Tree Without Roots is a portrayal of the life and culture of rural Muslims of Bengal in the early forties. More importantly, it stands out as a remarkable piece of literature for one reason in particular, that is, in terms of its relevance in present-day conditions, definitely in the rural areas and also to a fair extent among educated Muslims inhabiting urban areas. Therefore, to a reader, it feels as if the early 20th century and the

beginning of the 21st century are contemporaneous in terms of the significance given to the overriding theme of the use of religion. Most people seem to be vulnerable to social transformation, changing patterns of life and obviously lacking in courage to think for and assert them. In such light, Syed Waliullah seems to be a visionary depicting not only what happened then but also having a periscopic view of things to come as we experience them today. We know that things have not changed much for the better since then.



CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Lalsalu (1948) is a novel by Syed Waliullah. The story narrates how the fraudulent Majeed preys upon the religious feelings of his fellow villagers by exploiting a Mazar or tomb covered by a piece of lalsalu, the red cotton fabric associated with ascetics and holy men. The novel is set in the village of Mahabbatnagar and depicts the life of a rural Muslim community.

Syed Waliullah has also skillfully drawn a portrait of Majeed's young second wife Jamila. The novel was quite popular and was translated into Urdu and French, by Annemarie, the author's wife. In 1967 the novel was translated into English as *Tree Without Roots*. It was subsequently translated into Czech and German. The author was conferred the Bengali Academy Award for this novel. The novel was made into a movie in 2001

Waliullah, Syed (1922-1971) novelist, short story writer and playwright, was born on 15 August 1922 at Sholashahar in chittagong. His father, Syed Ahmadullah, was a government officer. His father's posting at different places provided an opportunity for the young Waliullah to see the life of people in different parts of East Bengal. This experience helped him create many of the characters of his novels and plays. In 1939 he passed the matriculation examination from Kurigram High School and in 1941 his IA from Dhaka College. After graduating with distinction from Anandamohan College in Mymensingh in 1943, he enrolled at Calcutta University to do Masters in Economics but

was unable to complete his studies. He also studied at different times at Feni High School, Chittagong Zila School and Krishnanagar College.

Waliullah's literary activities began when, as a student at Feni High School, he edited a hand-written magazine called, *Bhorer Alo*. His first short story 'Hathat Alor Jhalkani' was published in the Dhaka College magazine. He was proficient in both English and Bangla. He briefly published an English journal, *Contemporary*. He worked as a sub-editor in Calcutta's *Statesman* during 1945-47. He also used to write for *Saogat*, *Mohammadi*, *Bulbul*, *Parichay*, *Arani* and *Purbasha*. After the partition of India in 1947, Syed Waliullah came to Dhaka and joined Radio Pakistan, first as an assistant news editor, and later as a news editor in Karachi (1950-51). From 1951 to 1960 he served as a press attache at the Pakistan embassies in New Delhi, Sydney, Jakarta and London. From 1960 to 1967 he served as first secretary at the Pakistan embassy in Paris and from 1967 to 1971 he worked as a programme specialist at UNESCO in Paris. In 1971 Syed Waliullah worked for the liberation of Bangladesh and joined hands with his friend Justice Abu Sayeed Chowdhury to enlist the support of a number of French intellectuals including Pierre Emanuel and Andre Malraux in mobilizing world public opinion.

Before Syed Waliullah's (1922-1971) *Lalshalu* (1948), the history of novels of Bangladesh was not very significant. No doubt, there were attempts by a good number of writers, but only a few could create impression on the readers' mind. Mohammad Najibar Rahman's (1860-1923) *Anowara* (1914), Kazi Abdul Wadud's (1894-1970) *Nodibakshe* (1919), Kazi Imdadul Huq's (1882-1926) *Abdullah* (published in periodicals in 1920 and in book form in 1933), Abul Fazal's (1903-1983) *Prodip O Patongyo* (1940), Humayun

Kabir's (1906-1969) *Rivers and Women* (1945, Bangla version *Nodi O Nari* 1952) and Abul Fazal's *Shahashika* (1946) are the important instances. Then after the partition of 1947 came out *Lalshalu*, the first novel of Waliullah, which demonstrated the Bangali-society in a more analytic and artistic way. But when after sixteen years his second novel *Chander Amabashya* (Black Moon) was published in 1964 (although it was written in 1962-63) it heralded a newer voice in our novel. His third and last novel *Kando Nodi Kando* (*Cry River Cry* 1968) exposed that voice in a more delicate and pleasing way.

Syed Waliullah's wife, Anne Marie whom he married in 1955 translated his first novel *Lalsalu* (1948) into French. This was later translated into English as *Tree Without Roots* (1967). *Lalsalu* depicts the life of the people of rural East Bengal at a time when its intellectuals were greatly agitated over political issues. The novel exposes the manipulations and activities of charlatans exploiting the religious beliefs of the common people. The novel revealed his deep understanding of human psychology. *Lalshalu* was written before the partition of India and was published after that historic event. Right before the partition when there arose a high voice in favour of an independent state for the Muslims, Waliullah was trying to detect the falsity in pseudo-religious dogmas and practices, which voiced against freethinking and education. It is also worthy to mention that as the settlement of Pakistan was on the basis of religious rights, *Lalshalu* could not draw the attention of the Bangla Muslim literates. Only after the second edition of it in 1960 *Lalshalu* began to be popular.

Chander Amabasya (1964) and *Kando Nodi Kando* (1968) are two other novels by him that are considered exceptional additions to Bangla literature. In these two novels he also shows with great artistry his commitment to the philosophy of Existentialism.

There is no doubt that with '*Chander Amabashya*' Syed Waliullah introduced a different and uncommon narratology in Bangla novel. Before this novel the stream of consciousness technique was used in fiction but he applied this aspect more meticulously. In *Lalshalu* he does not use this rhetorical element, rather he was more sincere to narrate a story there. But in *Chander Amabashya* and *Kando Nodi Kando* he is more eager to expose the psychic realities of his characters.

In *Kando Nodi Kando* also we meet such a tormented man. Muhammad Mustafa, the most prominent character here, is that tormented person. His agony originates with the news of Khodeja's suicide. Muhammad Mustafa thinks that his widowed aunt's daughter Khodeja, who took shelter at Mustafa's, believed that Mustafa would marry Khodeja. But when she received the news of Mustafa's forthcoming marriage, she committed suicide although in reality her death was an accidental one. He begins to think that Khodeja's departed soul has turned to a revengeful spirit, which would follow Mustafa in every step of his life. After severe agony, consequently Mustafa hangs himself.

Moreover, keen observation of these two novels draws the readers' attention to the writer's use of words synonymous to 'perhaps' or 'possibly', Tens of hundreds of times Waliullah has used these words to exhibit the inner uncertainty of human mind. A

human being is inwardly never certain what he experiences through his senses. Or, he can never recall the things of past appropriately as they happened in the past.

Two books of short stories that he has written are *Nayanchara* (1951) and *Dui Tir O Anyanya Galpa*. Three plays that he composed are *Bahipir* (1960), *Tarangabhanga* (1964) and *Sudanga* (1964). His short stories and plays often expose the social prejudices, religious deceptions and moral aberrations of people.

Waliullah received several awards for his literary works at home and abroad. He was awarded the Ekushey Padak posthumously in 1983. Syed Waliullah died in Paris on 10 October 1971 and was buried in this city.



Literary works of Waliullah at a glance:

Genre	Name	Year
Novel	1. Lalsalu (Tree without roots)	1948
	2. Chander Amaboshay (Dark moon)	1964
	3. Kando Nadi Kando (Cry, o river)	1968
Short story collection	1. Nayanchara (1951)	1951
	2. Dui Tir O Anyanya Galpa	
Plays	1 Bahipir	1960
	2. Tarangabhanga	1964
	3. Sudanga	1964

Source: internet

Critic's remark on Waliullah's writing:

Some scholars provide critical points on his writings and select him one of the great novelist of South Asia.

(source: internet)

Some critics identify foreign influences on Syed Waliullah's last two novels. James Joyce (1882-1941), Virginia Woolf (1882-1941) Franz Kafka (1883-1924) or Albert Camus (1913-1960) are the most common names who are uttered in connection with the use of 'stream of consciousness' in *Chander Amabashya*. A reader may discover semblance between Jubak Shikshak and Joyce's Stephen of *Ulysses* (1922) or Woolf's Mrs. Ramsay or *To The Lighthouse* (1927). Regarding plot a reader may find such similarities with Kafka's *The Trial* (1925, Eng Translation 1937) and Camus' *The Outsider* (1942, Eng Translation 1946). In connection to *Kando Nodi Kando* along with the aforesaid names Jean-Paul Sartre's (1905-1980) *Nausea* (1938) is also referred.

But we should not forget that the genre 'novel' itself is an imported form. Since Bankimchandra Chattapadhyay (1838-1894) through onwards all the novelists owe hugely to foreign writers. Rather the credit that Waliullah should be awarded is that he has used them in his own way, in the context of our own society. Jubak Shikshak or Muhammad Mustafa are not characters alien to our society. They come out of this soil, its history, heritage and beliefs. The novelty of Waliullah is his detailed and investigative and interpretive study of his character

Distinguished Poet and Lenin Prize Winner for Literature Faiz Ahmed Faiz commented that "Syed Waliullah was one of the most socially conscious writers of South Asia who

dealt creatively with basic human problems. In my view, based on my reading of his novel *Tree Without Roots*, his play *The Breakers*, and some short stories and essays in English, his best writings deserve to be introduced to the world. (source internet)

National Professor of Bangladesh Professor Kabir Chowdhury states that “Syed Waliullah (1922-1971), novelist, short story writer, playwright and art critic, is a most distinguished man of letters of Bangladesh and a unique figure in Bengali literature”. (source:internet)

Professor Khan Sarwar Murshid Distinguished Man of Letters Former Vice-Chancellor, University of Rajshahi appreciates Waliullah’s writing and says “Syed Waliullah is our first truly modern writer of fiction. He is learned, complex and cosmopolitan and has nevertheless a heart that glows with a secret love for his people. He explores a terrain of experience not dealt with before – a world where deception, silence, suffering and loneliness are the dominant realities. He writes of human vulnerability in a language that calls for close attention and care from the reader”. (source:internet).

Professor Faiz Amed Faiz “Syed Waliullah was one of the most socially conscious writers of South Asia who dealt creatively with basic human problems. In my view, based on my reading of his novel *Tree Without Roots*, his play *The Breakers*, and some short stories and essays in English, his best writings deserve to be introduced to the world.”

R.K. Narayan is one of the most famous and widely read Indian novelists. His stories were grounded in a compassionate humanism and celebrated the humour and energy of ordinary life.

R.K. Narayan was born on October 10, 1906 in Madras. His father was a provincial head master. R.K. Narayan spent his early childhood with his maternal grandmother, Parvathi in Madras and used to spend only a few weeks each summer visiting his parents and siblings. R.K. Narayan studied for eight years at Lutheran Mission School close to his grandmother's house in Madras, also for a short time at the CRC High School. When his father was appointed headmaster of the Maharaja's High School in Mysore, R.K. Narayan moved back in with his parents. He obtained his bachelor's degree from the University of Mysore.

R.K. Narayan began his writing career with *Swami and Friends* in 1935. Most of his work including *Swami and Friends* is set in the fictional town of Malgudi which captures everything Indian while having a unique identity of its own. R.K. Narayan's writing style was marked by simplicity and subtle humour. He told stories of ordinary people trying to live their simple lives in a changing world.

R.K. Narayan's famous works include *The Bachelor of Arts* (1937), *The Dark Room* (1938), *The English Teacher* (1945), *The Financial Expert* (1952), *The Guide* (1958), *The Man-Eater of Malgudi* (1961), *The Vendor of Sweets* (1967), *Malgudi Days* (1982), and *The Grandmother's Tale* (1993). Among all his novel *The Guide* creates a remarkable spot in the world of writing.

V. S. Naipaul called Narayan "the Gandhi of modern Indian literature" for his mystical, community-oriented themes. But in questioning Narayan's lack of interest in Indian politics, Naipaul argued that the charming Malgudi fiction, especially the great early books, "depended on the notion of the timelessness of the petty life there, the true India just going on." The independence movement, as well as later social changes, would simply have been too radical, Naipaul claimed (Time International, 6/4/01.)

Others disagreed with such a stance. UN statesman and author Shashi Tharoor praised Narayan as "India's answer to Jane Austen" for his meticulous recording of the ironies of human life. He felt, however, that Narayan's charm masked the "banality of [his] concerns, the narrowness of his vision, the predictability of his prose, and the shallowness of [his] pool of experience." Indeed, Narayan benefited neither from a classical education nor from English taught by a native speaker. As a result, his style is conversational and, to some degree, a bit plain. [See sidebar.] Yet perhaps because of Narayan's simple style, as well as his simple plots, Tharoor continued, "the stories have a universal appeal" and are "infused with a Hindu humanism that is ultimately Narayan's most valuable characteristic, making even his most poignant stories comedies of suffering rather than tragedies of laughter" (The Hindu, 7/8/01).

"Perhaps the most remarkable example of the difficult genre- the serious comedy –to which R.K. Narayan's novels belong is *The Guide* (1958)...It seems to me not only his best novel but the one in which his characteristic qualities show themselves most clearly."-----William Walsh

“Despite his predilection for fantasy, Mr. Narayan’s strength is that of a realist and satirist...he seems unable to find adequate subject matter, where his vein of fantasy can cooperate with his intelligence. In his case, perhaps, the danger is of under – commitment, thus limiting him to (often) external mockery of a society which he cannot interpret. But at least he is not blinded by the illusion that the novel in India must be uniquely Indianised. He may yet produce something flawless, and meanwhile he should have a good influence on younger writers. Simply by showing that modern fiction can be written in lucid and non-adjectival prose, he has done a great service.”

-T.D. Brunton

“ Mr.Narayan uses a pure English ,easy and natural in its run and tone always an evolved and conscious medium.”

-William Walsh.

Narayan's stories begin with realistic settings and everyday happenings in the lives of a cross-section of Indian society, with characters of all classes. Gradually fate or chance, oversight or blunder, transforms mundane events to preposterous happenings. Unexpected disasters befall the hero as easily as unforeseen good fortune. The characters accept their fates with an equanimity that suggests the faith that things will somehow turn out happily, whatever their own motivations or actions. Progress, in the form of Western-imported goods and attitudes, combined with bureaucratic institutions, meets in Malgudi with long-held conventions, beliefs, and ways of doing things. The modern world can

never win a clear-cut victory because Malgudi accepts only what it wants, according to its own private logic.

Reviewing Narayan's 1976 novel *The Painter of Signs*, Anthony Thwaite of the *New York Times* said Narayan created "a world as richly human and volatile as that of Dickens." His next novel, *A Tiger for Malgudi* (1983), is narrated by a tiger whose holy master is trying to lead him to enlightenment. It and his fourteenth novel *Talkative Man* (1987) received mixed reviews.

In his 80s, Narayan continued to have books published. He returned to his original inspiration, his grandmother, with the 1994 book *Grandmother's Tale and Other Stories*, which *Publishers Weekly* called "an exemplary collection from one of India's most distinguished men of letters." Donna Seaman of *Booklist* hailed the collection of short stories that spanned over 50 years of Narayan's writing as "an excellent sampling of his short fiction, generally considered his best work" from "one of the world's finest storytellers." Narayan once noted: "Novels may bore me, but never people."



CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

This paper is concerned with two novels '*The Guide*' by R.K. Narayan and "*Tree Without Roots*" by Syed Waliullah .By studying the two texts closely I find the characters of Raju in *The Guide* and Majeed in *Tree Without Roots* very fascinating. So, I select these two major characters to compare and contrast. This is the topic of my thesis paper for which I also search the internet and university library .I went through some articles, My friends and respected teacher help me to move forward in my work. Raju and Majeed are the main source of the novel on the basis of which the story unfolds. They are the most complex tragic and moving characters of their writers.

The title, theme and language use by the writers are also artistically placed to catch the attention of the readers. Besides Raju and Majeed there are other characters such as Rosie and Marco in *The Guide* ,Jamila and Rahima in *Tree Without Roots* are marvelously successful in evoking the life of India and Bangladesh. Both the writers choose fictional village and town, Malgudi in *The Guide* and Mahabbatpur in *Tree Without Roots*.as the setting for a sizable part of the story. They represent s the real picture of human life, concern human psychology and their relationship, which they represent through simple language. They enable us to see man's place in society and the changes in inter-personal relationship, position in the world and also try to establish the true picture of two different societies with the support of these two major character. Raju and Majeed like other human being are simple, common and ordinary person. But their fate play a vital role and make them an extraordinary man from a normal man. Because of their personality, confidence and knowledge they both become a superhuman unconsciously

and able to achieve the respect of others. Through my study I also focus on some similarities and differences between them. They both have good and bad side like other people but are the best creation of their writers. They grow according to their own laws, very clear character and provide the true picture of human life.

I began by closely studying the two novels and noting down everything about the two protagonist so that I could place all items side by side for the purpose of comparison and contrast. I also went through existing criticism available on the two books. Then I organized my material in a logical order before undertaking the task of writ up. I tried to use analytical and exploratory technique in pursuing this study.



CHAPTER 4

CHARACTER ANALYSIS OF RAJU

"...Some are born great, some achieve greatness
and some have greatness thrown upon them."

Act v. Sc.i *Twelfth Night*, Shakespeare

The Guide is the most complex of R.K. Narayan's novels and its protagonist Raju is the most completely and incisively drawn character. From innocent childhood to the trying times of his adult life, Raju undergoes a number of experiences—experiences that arise out of and affect a life lived instinctually without adhering to social ethics. Raju is an outgoing, resourceful, romantic and materialistic young man whose heart obviously rules over his head. In a long series of unscrupulous acts he cuckolds a husband, drives out his old widowed mother, forges Rosie's signature and to top it all plays on the beliefs of innocent villagers. It is on account of a congenital goodness in him and the unique inner compulsion of being naturally helpful that Raju is metamorphosed from an impostor to a martyr. Narayan himself does not waste time in telling us that "it was in his nature to get involved in other people's interests and activities" (8).

R.K. Narayan manipulates his character Raju in such a way that after reaching the peak, there is a fall. The novel itself is a story of Raju's birth and death, rise and fall, sin and repentance, his growth from ordinary tourist guide to a spiritual guide. Raju's story of the childhood moves to his rise as a tourist guide, to a lover, to manager and eventual fall due to forgery, and onward into a Swami and Mahatma. Raju's role also highlights

man's journey from ignorance, birth to death, and love to altruism and materialism to spiritualism. He attains his salvation through various phases of life each of which is transitory. He is playing such a role that he knows what he does .He is an ordinary man with a hint of extraordinary. He is hardworking and lazy, careless with money but money-minded person, his life is neither a comedy nor a tragedy. He is a potentially tragic figure .He has a good knowledge of human psychology and very much eager to know the unknown .All these make Raju a complex character or we can say a normal human being with a combination of good and bad things.

Raju grows up near a railway station, and become a shopkeeper and then a resourceful tourist guide. Raju was a born romantic. He took immense delight in men and vehicles, boys and dogs and in every thing surrounded by him. He had the nature of knowing the unknown and his greater attitude allows him to become an extraordinary man from an ordinary parson. He is an extrovert person who likes to develop relationship with every body.

As the story unfolds, Raju's life takes a dramatic turn after meeting Rosie. Raju is fascinated by the beauty of Rosie and wins her heart by his sympathy, consideration and keen interest in her art (*Bharat Natyam* is, the classical dance of India) and also proves to be an ideal lover. Raju is an ordinary human being and like other mortals he has some weakness .He has jealousy of Marco (the husband of Rosie) .He feels that Marco is distracting Rosie's attention from him and he conceals the book from Rojie because he is afraid that the book may arouse her admiration for Marco. But the greatest betrayal committed by Raju is his signing of the papers sent by Marco. The paper is actually to be

signed by Rosie but again Raju feels unsecured and signs it by himself by forgoing Rosie's signature. This Raju did because he love Rosie is so much but at every stage he does feel guilty for his dishonest behavior.

His mistake dragged him to the jail where he played the role of a gentle and nice person. He also makes the superintendent happy by working hard and also became a model prisoner. His prison life has made him tough and it helped him become a real Swami. A short jail sentence for a petty offence does not seem a sufficient expiation. The time is not yet ripe for his salvation, for he has yet to commit the lowliest of all moral crimes—exploiting the blind faith of gullible villagers—the suffering that is to follow shall of course be in direct proportion to his offence. Somewhere along the way, the comic hero ceases to be himself and enters the arena of the Sublime. He overcomes his ego, rejects the physical pleasures of life and from a fake Swami he emerges as a saint became the real Swami, about which he was unaware. At the very beginning of the novel, we have Raju taking refuge in Mangala because he has “nowhere else to go”. He tries to tell Velan, the servile villager, “I am not as great as you imagine. I am just an ordinary” (8). But Velan nevertheless starts narrating his personal problem in the hope of finding a solution. And soon Raju experienced a feeling of importance. He felt like an actor who was always expected to utter the right sentence towards to people of the village, though Raju tried his best to escape from that fake life but he failed. Public interest is roused in Raju's fast. Cameras are focused on the spot from where Raju starts walking towards the erstwhile river, the place where he stands for two hours and prays and where he subsequently meditates. The whole drama takes place because of Velan's idiotic brother,

who distorts Raju's message that Raju becomes a victim of circumstances. Raju finds that he can do nothing but go through with the ritual which also requires him to stand for several hours a day up to his waist in the stream while he prays for rain. Now at least his will matches his receptivity. In this way spiritual regeneration takes place, and Raju becomes a martyr for the good of others. It is now that he rises above his narrow, selfish individualism and identifies himself with the people of Mangal, and with humanity as a whole which also make Raju an idol to the villagers.

The ultimate irony of the story emanates from the astounding transformation of Raju's personality. It is interesting to note that Raju as the Swami gets enamored by his own new self and naively forgets the limitations of the ordinary mortal hiding inside the almost superhuman manifestation of sainthood. "He was hypnotized by his own voice; he felt himself growing in stature as he saw the upturned faces of the children shining in the half light when he spoke. No one was more impressed with the grandeur of the whole thing than Raju himself" (47). As a result of this conceit and a larger-than-life image of himself, this once prosperous man-about-town is seen standing in knee-deep water with unkempt hair, an overgrown beard and a starving body. This picture provides Raju as a tragic hero.

Destiny seems to prevent and reward Raju with a determined thrust and one is constantly reminded of the Greek idea of a powerful fate, which no body can avoid. But the likeness seems to end here because Raju is not a hero in the conventional Greek or Elizabethan sense. He is an ordinary man with neither any great ethical principles nor any compelling

tragic flaws. His greatest weakness is his being besotted by Rosie, and his act of knowingly forsaking his mother in that state of infatuation is a turpitude one would like to wish away. His powers of insight are almost negligible for he does not really understand Rosie till the very end. Her sensitivity and guilt are beyond his comprehension as he himself is devoid of these qualities. His life is a series of blunders but he never feels the need for introspection. Raju lives for the present and fails to see any relation between cause and effect.

One must, however, add that in Raju the swindler, there is also an inherent goodness, an underlying streak of saintliness. To give the man his due, we must concede that Raju never consciously works on being a saint nor would he have ever imagined the end he ultimately meets with. In fact, he even contemplates escaping from the temple but feels moved by the recollection of the big crowd of women and children touching his feet and is moved by their faith in him. Narayan has drawn the dilemma of Raju in a superb manner. Though Raju is an opportunist who uses the villagers for his own survival, it was never his intention to cultivate a false image of himself for their consumption. He is a drifter who seeks refuge in procrastination and would willfully beat around the bush rather than look at a problem in the eye. His indecisiveness, which is almost Hamlet-like ultimately, brings about his own extinction.

The novel also tells us two stories, that of Raju's relationship with Rosie and that of Raju's relationship with the villagers as a holy man. The dualism reflects the dualism in Raju's character, which the writer portrayed in a supreme way.

CHAPTER 5

MAJEED IN TREE WITHOUT ROOTS

In the novel *Tree Without Roots* the writer has portrayed the traditional superstitious Muslim society of Bangla. He presents through the story of Majeed the protagonist of the story the sly impostor, who acts like a saviour of the helpless men and women around him, is himself a poor man and has been driven to his fraudulence by the need for a livelihood.

The protagonist of the novel, Majeed, being a crafty person lacking in every other quality of character except having some mastery over the edicts of religion, can easily find out what and who will be his target group over whom he can reign to earn his livelihood. Rural people, basically being innocent and gullible, become an easy prey and not surprisingly because what matters in this transaction is one of the most sensitive aspects in the lives of the majority of the people, that is, religion. Rural Muslim communities cannot be any exception to that. Wielding religious mantras and power over the deprived, disadvantaged people of Mahabbatpur who otherwise are not so desperate in spite of some of their miseries turn out to be a viable business ground for Majeed. His sole weapon is striking at their hearts with a motive to arouse the instinct of fear and exploit it fully to his own advantage, an instinct as primitive in the life of a human being as the dawn of history. And he succeeds by invoking the Creator and His boundless power over His creation in his very own way.



The story unbolts at a remote village in some marshy region of the country as suddenly a bearded Mullah arrives among the simple and unlettered Muslim community. “They saw a stranger with a thin beard, standing in the middle of the road. His hands were raised, face turned up towards the sky, eyes closed. He was praying.”(Chapter 2, p-9)

This way Majeed, a quite haggardly middle-aged man impresses the innocent villagers with his religious knowledge and profundity. Soon after his arrival Majeed starts cleaning and renovating an old, dilapidated grave lying in an un-cared state since ages among the bamboo forests, after that he announces the uncared- tomb is of a great priest of high honor which causes a sort of fear among the common people of the village and thus taking after the responsibility of looking after the tomb, Majeed begins his establishment for livelihood. Majeed also rebukes the ignorant villagers for neglecting the place for such a long period of time.

Majeed, skillfully fast manages to enchant the poor people, illiterate folks with his fake speeches on religion and soon succeeds to create a supernatural awe and mystery around the grave thus bringing the people of the entire village under his influence. The mysterious grave overnight turns into a holy place which is covered with a red piece of cloth on top of the oval shaped grave and glowing candles gives the place a metaphysical atmosphere. Verses from the Quran recited by Majeed day and night create wonder in the minds of the villagers; most of them are landless peasants. Completely succumbed in the spell, people start bringing offerings of cash and kinds to the holy place, in fact to the

self-created vault of Majeed. Majeed a vagabond with no home and land and no identity within a few years, makes his fortune and enormous influence on the villagers.

Majeed builds his house next to the mazar(the holy place) and soon after he think of finding a wife for himself, and made a inner house for his wife .

Majeed, the holy man of the village then marries Rahima who was a widow, a hard working pleasant woman, not so young, robustly built yet docile and obedient to his commanding husband, but after some years Majeed feels that the single wife is not enough for him. He begins to visualize the physical features of Hasunir Ma who helps Rohima in her house hold chores the wife of Byapari. As a consequence we get the arrival of Jamila as Majeed's second wife. A very young teenager, who is intelligent, she soon sniffs something fishy about her husband's spiritual authority .Jamila, the simple young girl has been portrayed as the nemesis of Majeed, who causes the collapse her husband's hypocritical facade. When most of the people of the village fail to earn the minimal livelihood, no sort of want catouch Majeed. From every effort of him, he only ensures about it very intentionally. Soon after his second marriage Majeed discovers with the aim of Jamila is not that much submissive. She does not posses any fear in the name of religion; she is stubborn and does whatever she considers better; she denies all the shackles that Majeed wants to give her. Jamila's attitude towards Majeed shakes him with fear because Majeed want to control her with his fake power and tries to make her fool, which he was not able to do.

Majeed forms a fear among the villagers since his emergence in the village continues till the end of the novel. Whenever he feels necessity, Majeed sharpens that

word of fear creating different spells. Regarding the traditional practices and beliefs of villagers, Majeed preaches of his own keeping pace with the holy books. The incident which Majeed compelled an elderly boy and his father to be circumcised contributes largely in Majeed's enterprise. Even convincing Byapari to divorce his first wife Amena and compelling him to do it, Majeed matures his own plans only. When Akhas Ali wants to set up a school in the village in order to get rid of the illiteracy, Majeed bravely meets the challenge and establishes his opinion very skillfully that a mosque is far more important. Through the novel it can be seen that when ever any sign of obstruction appears on the way of Majeed existence, he manages to handle the situation very cleverly.

But only two cases that make Majeed perplexed are the arrival of Peer Shahib in neighbouring village and the apparently anti-religious behavior of his second wife Naila. The appearance of the Peer Shahib lands Majeed in a sort of footless situation though he survives from that turn but not able to find out the way to deal with his wife Naila.

In the novel *Tree Without Roots* the writer represents the true picture of a muslim Majeed who plays an absurd role. Majeed, an active missionary, has two roles into himself. He is the one who plants fear in to the heart of the innocent villagers in the name of religion, makes them feel guilty for neglecting the grave of the saint and slowly becomes a ruler. On the other hand he is a lonely man and becomes the slave of his own creation. He is fearful to others but frightened within himself. He has no sharer of his secrets and is incapable of opening his heart to anyone; he is the hero, a tragic hero to whom fate plays a vital role. All Majeed did in order to survive, he just tried to strike

roots in a land where he had never been before and he choose wisely religion as a path to live life and too fool the innocent people but he is trapped in his own web and becomes a holy man who had to stay in the Majar during the flood occur and wanted to protect his holy place from the natural disaster. The change of a human nature from good to bad, the play of fate and the reality of Bangladesh is what the writer portrays in a very artistic way in his novel *Tree Without Roots* through the character of Majeed.



CHAPTER 6

SIMILARITIES BETWEEN THE TWO CHARACTER (RAJU AND MAJEED)

Every human being is exceptional and different in nature and very hardly similarities can be found among them. Raju and Majeed the two different characters of two different novels which are also written by two different writers got something common between them. Destiny plays a vital role with both of them. That is why from normal human beings Raju and Majeed become seemingly superhuman. Raju from a wall-keeper becomes a tourist guide and then turns into a fake Swami and finally a real Swami, Swami the great. Majeed is a simple man an outsider of the village Chhabatnagore. He arrives one day and declares the uncared tomb as the grave of a holy person or Saint and slowly enchants the innocent village people with his religious speech and makes his fortune. He becomes a man well rooted in the society and also turns into a sacred man towards the villagers. Raju and Majeed both have a good knowledge of human psychology. That's why they are able to influence the people around them and achieve success in their life. They are fraud and good actors but both of them are caught in to their own fate though they do not have any ill will except of the disturbing requirement of eking out a living.

Raju and Majeed are normal and simple person. The type of person can be found all around the country but what gives their character a touch of dignity is their transformation. Majeed from a fake mullah turns into a real holy man and begins to believe in his own supernatural power and that is the reason why he does not flee. He

wades through knee deep water with the conviction that he can save the mazar when the natural disaster occurs. Raju in *The Guide* is also caught in his own snare of pretensions. At one point he starts believing that he is capable of supernatural feats - he can really bring rain to a draught-struck area through prayer and fasting. They both are engaging into a process call auto- suggestion, they themselves even are not aware about the whole circumstances.

Raju and Majeed are the tragic heroes of their writer. The protagonist Majeed is a fellow who has no friend to share his secrets, to share his feelings; he is the lonely holy man who becomes the slave of his own conception which makes him a tragic character. On the other hand Raju a simple and common man with an unusual touch plays so many roles; he is a man with many occupations. He is a railway guide, a tourist guide, then a dancing guide, a prisoner guide and finally a spiritual guide. We can see that consequently many changes occur in his life and all indicates that he is a real guide but at the end of the story he also caught like Majeed in his own establishment and has to suffer in order to become a real Swami. The description of his suffering remains a touchy feeling among the readers which makes him a tragic hero.

Both Raju and Majeed are simulators and capable actors. They try to express their personality in their role as holy men. In fact they are aware of the mask they put on and manipulate it in such a way that we do not see their real face .They both contain attractive personality which helps them to move further, influencing people and build self-confidence among them. They both represent the picture of their own country: Raju represents the Indian theme, culture, atmosphere and Majeed represents the superstitious muslim society. They both select their own brand of religion. They both are very brave,

courageous, clever, intelligent, hard working, have impressive personality and keep a good knowledge about human nature. All these qualities help them to face any challenges in their life and help them to move promote. They are the hero and the creation of their writers and they characterize them very inventively and these minor similarities of Majeed and Raju should not be neglected.



CHAPTER 7

DIFFERENCES BETWEEN THE TWO CHARACTER (RAJU AND MAJEED)

The two central character from the novel *The Guide* and *Tree Without Roots* Raju and Majeed are the superb creations of their writer and although they have similarities among them, the differences are no less conspicuous, that make one a superhero and the other a hero.

Raju is a versatile figure who comes from middle-class family and he is a moving character whereas Majeed is a man who has no family no background and no initial moving quality. Raju is more productive than the character Majeed. Raju is an outgoing person who likes to develop a relationship with other people around him. At the beginning Raju becomes a tourist guide by the chance when he is given charge of the railway shop, then a dancing guide of Rosie, a prisoner's guide when he is on the jail, and a spiritual guide. Raju is more educated and knowledgeable than Majeed.

Raju reads book and papers to while away his time, gathers information and always provides correct information to the passengers and he never says 'no' to anybody. Raju is always ready to help people. Even in jail Raju behaves like a gentleman. He becomes familiar with the official of the jail and he helps them in attending to other prisoners. So it indicates that he has a helping nature. Raju also helps Rosie to become a famous dancer. Raju's guidance, tact and leadership qualities lead to their success.

On the other hand Majeed is a self-centered person who does not have any interest on any reading stuff .who only does things that are good for himself. He is a person who only thinks about his own profit and how he can make more money, how to use power to have control over the innocent people. Majeed always wants to keep the innocent village people in dark and never helps them move forward.For this he uses religion as his power. That's why when Akas Ali attempts to set up a school in the village ,Majeed tactfully discourages to that. Majeed creates fear among the villagers from the beginning till the end of the novel. At whatever time he feels necessity, Majeed sharpens that weapon of fear by creating different spell. He does not want the expansion of the village and of the people.All he wants is to have power over the entire village. Because of his attitude he loses his respect in his wife (Jamila's) eye .He is not a lovable and co-operative person rather an inflexible, dull man, with no feelings for anybody.

However, Raju is in a way everyman , who has hidden potentialities for great actions deep inside him. Raju is not only an active character but one who is largely the architect of his own fate . At the same time because of Raju the small village soon becomes a centre of frenzied activity. Special trains and buses ferry people across to Mangala, film shows on malaria, tuberculosis, plague and mosquitoes are on, the Tea Propaganda Board sets up stalls, and health inspectors do the rounds while a merry-go-round whines all day. Gambling booths are doing brisk business even as people are watching informative films on dams, river valleys and various other projects. The post-office is choked with mail for the fasting Swami while some lesser mortals have decided to help the Swami through his ordeal by singing devotional songs to the accompaniment of a harmonium and tabla. The place is crawling with representatives of the Press. What

ever Raju did for the people is good for them, though he does such things for his own sake. He is a good leader and guide people genuinely he is loved for his loveable, genial and co-operative nature.

Raju as a born romantic is enchanted by the panorama of life. At heart Raju is puritan. A new phase begins in his life when he meets with Rosie, he falls in love at the moment he sees her. He is also respectful to women and that is why initially he is sympathetic and attracted towards Rosie. He is also a dutiful son, a model prisoner, a delightful person and not a violent.

Majeed is just the opposite. He has no respect for women, to him women are for being a good wife who will respect and obey the order of their husband and give birth to children. Even to exert his influence on his second wife Jamila one night he locks her in the tomb-shade which indicates his awful manners towards women. Love, romance is far away from Majeed. He is a commanding husband and a very practical man who only thinks about his own good. But at the end of the story the selfish turns into a different person who cares for the Mazar and also thought about his wife's safety and not care about himself.

All these above differences make Raju a superhero and Majeed a hero, but both are the heroes as of their writer and will remain so.

CONCLUSION:

Focusing on two different characters Raju and Majeed both the writers want to represent us the true image of two different countries ,the people, their culture, atmosphere and the human nature. Raju and Majeed are normal and simple human beings like us and even if we look around we will find Majeed and Raju everywhere around the society. But the only thing that makes them special is their transformation from an ordinary human into extraordinary ones.

At the stage of their transformation they both face complexity but such complexity make them more mature and wiser to move forward .Fate play a vital role with both the protagonist. It rules them and they are unconsciously trapped by it .

Syed Waliullah's *Tree Without Roots* provides a picture of eternal Bangladesh, subject to the ravages of nature, of storms and floods, of cyclones and dying rivers. Though critical of the exploitation of religion,Syed Waliullah looks sympathetically at Majeed for whom religion means food and shelter. Same thing also happen in case of R.K. Narayan's *The Guide* _represents authentic portrayal of India and provides tragic character Raju the protagonist is a symbol of wisdom, guidance and common sense.

Some imagine them as tragic characters, some hero is and some blame their luck because of the end .In the novel *The Guide* and *Tree Witout Roots*_the end is mysterious and ambiguous, like life. The readers are wondering whether Raju and Majeed die or continue to live and enjoy their reputation; whether they live as genuine holy men or fake holy men, whether Majeed is able to save his Mazar from the natural calamity or

Raju can bring back rain. The ambiguity at the end combines an amusing mixture of realism and fantasy, adds structural charm of novels and help readers to think of their own way.

To conclude, Raju in *The Guide* and Majeed in *Tree Without Roots* are similar and dissimilar in many ways. They waded through deception and fraudulent practice to eke their living. They pretended to be great and both were ultimately caught in their own snares. Circumstances compelled them to play roles unexpected of them. At one point they reached a heroic dimension and felt convinced of some greatness latent in themselves. It was not easy to move away from this auto-suggestion of greatness. In their doom they earned heroic dignity and rose to a height unexpected for them to negotiate.

That way both the characters went through a process of metamorphosis. Both started as scheming human beings cooking up deception to achieve their selfish ends. But when things took surprising turns, and people around lavished greatness and spiritual power on them, they could not escape from playing heroic roles. This valiant effort alone gives a dignity to them and suddenly they were transformed from crooked people into extraordinary human beings capable of performing feats of greatness. Both Syed Waliullah's *Tree Without Roots* and R. K. Narayan's *The Guide* portrayed remarkable men who act and are acted upon in brilliant ways.



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