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'Raju', the Fake Swami and 'Majid', the Fake Khadem: An Inter-literary Comparative Study between R.K. Narayan's *The Guide* (1958) and Syed Waliullah's লালসালু *(Lalsalu)* (1948)

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ABSTRACT: This paper is an inter-literary comparison between two protagonists of the novels The Guide by renown Indian author R.K. Narayan and লালসালু (Lalsalu) by Bangladeshi author Syed Waliullah. Where the former one is written in English, the later one is in Bengali. However, considering the similarity in pseudo-religious operation, the paper basically compares two protagonists of the two novels. Firstly, through this comparison reason/s for the possibility of pseudo-religious operation as well as religious superstitions in Indian subcontinent will be found out according to the storylines of these two novels. Thus, how Hinduism and Islam, two major religious beliefs of Indian Subcontinent, are (mis)used by two protagonists in two different novels in two different countries is scrutinized deeply. Secondly, by the representations of Raju and Majid by R. K. Narayan and Syed Waliullah, these authors' standpoint to their protagonists can also be analyzed. Thirdly, Raju and Majid's views on woman is compared analytically. Through the comparative study between Raju and Majid, religious aspects of these two novels are collated in the paper.

Keywords: Inter-literary comparison, Pseudo-religious operation, Religious Superstitions, Indian subcontinent etc.

1. INTRODUCTION

R.K. Narayan's novel, *The Guide* (1958) and Syed Waliullah's novel, *Lalsalu* (1948) have thematic similarity regarding the portrayal of pseudo-religion via the ersatz saints who are the protagonists of the two novels. Being an Indian, R.K. Narayan has written all his works in

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English which is why he is regarded as an Indian-English novelist and writer. On the other hand, Syed Waliullah has published all his works in Bengali at first hand. This paper is a comparative study between two protagonists from these two novels: Raju and Majid. The paper seeks for the different perspectives of social politics and social states from two different countries (i.e. India and Bangladesh) which belong to two different cultures.

"Over seven decades of literary activity, he had produced fourteen novels, countless essays, and dozens of stories, the majority of his fiction set in a South Indian town that he called Malgudi" (Mason, 2006). The religious part of *The Guide* is also set in Malgudi. The novel narrates the transformation of the protagonist, Raju, from a tour guide to a spiritual guide and then one of the greatest holy men of India. On the other hand, *লালসালু (Lalsalu)* is the first work of Syed Waliullah which was written in Bengali and was published in 1948. Later in 1967 Waliullah himself published its translation in English Tree Without Roots with a number of changes. For this, it is also called as transcreation (Kamal, 2018). However, "Tree Without Roots, actually a transcreation by Waliullah himself which has been pleasingly accepted as enhanced version" (Chakrabarty, 2018). His exclusion is marked as "shocking" as it has marked a narrowing of the social dimension of the novel (Kamal, 2018).

It is evident that both the novels have focused on the superstitious, uneducated society and inhabitants of rural area of both India and Bangladesh (East Pakistan). Although, Narayan's novel has dealt not only with the theme of pseudo-religion, it has been one of the most prior themes of the novel. On the contrary, Waliullah's whole concentration of *Lalsalu* is on the pseudo-religion and religious superstitions of the rural Bengali people. It is very important to consider that Narayan has dealt in *The Guide* with the blindness of the rural people who are from Hindu religion but Waliullah has shown the religious blindness of the Muslim uneducated rural people in *Lalsalu*. More importantly, it might be a more interesting way of thinking by considering the lack of education and consciousness as the reason for blindness in two different religions and cultures.

Where Majid, the protagonist of *Lalsalu*, has become the 'Khadem' (the caretaker of a holy place) of the 'Mazar' (the holy place) of 'Modaccher Pir' with well-knit plan, Raju, the protagonist of *The Guide*, has become a 'Swami' of abandoned temple on the banks of the 'Sarayu River' initially to the villagers of Mangala and later to whole India. Also, Narayan's dealing with Raju is a softer one who at the end of the novel is shown to

transcend to a pure spiritual character than the harsh representation of Majid by Waliullah. However, through deep analysis it will be found that both of the characters run almost on the same track. Then, both Raju and Majid's view about woman is also an interesting point to be compared. Even the fuel that has forced both Raju and Majid, shown by both Narayan and Waliullah, can be viewed from a similar perspective.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

As in the title, the term 'inter-literary' is used instead of 'comparative literature', it is suggested that Durišin's (1974) inter-literary theory is addressed here. This also implies that the contributions of inter-literary theory to rethinking comparative literature is supported here (Domínguez, Saussy, & Villanueva, 2014). In simple words, inter-literary comparison is comparative study between two different literatures. As *Lalsalu* is a national literature of Bangladesh, an inter-literary comparison of it with other literature (i.e. *The Guide* in this case) should have an impact on Bangladeshi literature. As: "The study of the relationships of a national literature to other literatures, i.e. to the interliterary context, contributes not only to the formulation of the laws of the interliterary process, but also frequently and even primarily to the knowledge of the individual character and specific nature of the national literature" (Durišin, 1989).

Moreover, "the interliterary process starts with national literatures and proceeds from them until world literature" (Domínguez, Saussy, & Villanueva, 2014). This statement reflects how significant it is to do comparative study of national literatures with other literatures. Considering international recognition, R. K. Narayan is undoubtedly more recognized than Syed Waliullah. Thus, a comparative study between these two authors' work, might open more space for Bangladeshi literature in the world tenet. "The interliterary theory aims to explain how relationships are established between individual works and, as a result of these relationships, how literary groups are created—from smaller to larger—and hence how they determine some dominant directions of (world) literature" (Domínguez, Saussy, & Villanueva, 2014). This statement of Domínguez et al. (2014) more specifically shows the value of doing comparative study with a national literature.

Pseudo-religion is a vital theme in both of the novels. Generally religion refers to a set of beliefs that can control people with their will. Greek word pseudo means falsehood. "Pseudo-religion means man-made religious ideology that has been performed for worldly success by ersatz-saints. It is

not a part of religion rather, it is an anti-religious ideology" (Walid & Islam, 2018). In Narayan's *The Guide*, this is not the only theme, but Waliullah places fake religiousness as the only major theme. "In tracing the metamorphosis of Raju - the protagonist of *The Guide* - from shopkeeper to tourist guide to stage manager to holy man, Narayan's novel delves both into the pitfalls and the redemptive potential of transformation" (Fatin, 2019). At the peak of his transformation, Raju redeems himself as a spiritual guide. "In this way, the novel also affirms the Hindu principle of dharma—understood as a law or principle along which an individual acts out their fate" (Fatin, 2019). It is true that he has not chosen to be a religious guru intentionally in the novel, but when the opportunity is opened to him by Velan and other villagers, he has not ignored it too. Thus, Raju transforms existential mode from 'changing the world for his need or desire' from 'changing the himself according to the world'. Kierkagaard's existentialism is active here which refers existentialism is a style of philosophizing rather than a body of philosophical doctrines (Abbagnano, 2021).

On the other hand, Majid, the protagonist of *Lalsalu* very intentionally takes the role of 'Khadem' at a rural village in Bangladesh. Moreover, according Jannat and Rayhan (2018) *Lalsalu* was first published in 1948, just a year after the dismissal of British Colonies from the Indian subcontinent and so, Majid can be considered as the colonizer over the landless peasants who are the colonizers. Thus, Waliullah has strongly portrays Majid, as a fortune hunter and uneducated, landless villagers are his preys. Majid's transformation to ersatz saint is his existential mode which is 'changing the world around him according to his need and desires'. Again, Chakrabarty (2018) points out that Bangladesh is born out of excluding "Hindu India" in 1947 and also excluding "Muslim Pakistan" in 1971. So, the state of Islam in Bangladesh is not a steady one and so people of Bangladesh can be convinced religiously in an easier way. The becoming of Majid's the khadem of the grave also suggests so. About Waliullah's writing *Lalsalu* Referring to Amir Khan Shahid Jannat and Rayhan (2018) states, "After very thoroughly analyzing the causes of Muslims decline he set himself to the task of reforming the Muslim society." To compare Raju and Majid transperantly it is important to note on their views on woman too.

As discussing fake religiousness of *The Guide* and *Lalsalu*, Raju and Majid's treatment of woman is unavoidable. It suggests intentionally or unintentionally the exact atmosphire of the societies represented in the novels. The patriarchal power of the Bengali Muslim society of the 20th century has been represented through the protagonist Majid in *Lalsalu*

(Chakrabarty, 2018). In *Lalsalu* not a single woman is portrayed as powerful. None of them has got the right to make decesion. "The political, religious and social order of its making onto the community are imposed by patriarchal paradigms" (Chakrabarty, 2018). Majid's second teenage wife 'জমিলা' (Jamila) becomes his nemesis as she does not fear either Majid or the 'মাজার' (mazar) or the grave. According to Jannat and Ryhan (2018) Majid can even be considered as an extremist as they are intolerant suppressing their intolerance over their opponents. His final action on Jamila reflects his extreme self clearly. In *The Guide* this is also found. Raju and all other male characters disvalue female characters of the novel. When Rosie confesses to her husband Marco that she has committed a blunder, he totally ignores her. Rosie says, "I followed him, day after day, like a dog waiting on his grace" (Narayan, 1958).

Marco listenss no explanation, not even penitence and leaves Roise determinedly (Divya, 2017). Thus, Rosie has no choice but to be with Raju. By Raju she is exploited to the utmost possibility (Divya, 2017). Rosie is nothing but commodity to Raju rather than a person with her own aspirations and Raju treats a gold mine in herself. She is the actual earning person but she has no authority over her and/or over any decesion. Raju has deprived her of liberty, both in private and public life (Divya, 2017). The portrayal of the character of Raju's mother is also interesting. Being a woman, a female human, she cannot authorize over her own son. "She is one who cannot understand the liaison of her son with the wife of another person. She seethes with anger though she feels all along that she cannot undo it" (Pushpanathan, 2017). Thus, in both of the novels male chauvinist societies are apparent. *In Lalsalu* there is only one social setting, but in *The Guide*, there are several social settings, two villages and a city to be precise. However, in each and every community in represented *The Guide* male chauvinism is unavoidable.

Both Waliullah and Narayan have shown their master class capability in building the characters of their novels, especially the protagonists, Raju and Majid. Both Raju and Majid have been portrayed as religious cheats. Are these portrayals same? Raju is not portrayed as a religious cheat from the beginning of the novel, but he has propensity for deceit which leads him into ultimate trouble (Fatin, 2019). However, Narayan depends on Lacan's theory of unsatisfying desire in each and every major characters in the novel. Nobody is satisfied with their established social realities. Raju nor Rosie holds the stronger ego or I (Ideal ego) to overpower the unconscious/ the void/the lack/desire (Islam & Akter, 2016). Moreover,

this unsatisfaction leads Raju to be adventurous in every stages of his life. When Narayan portrays Raju as a saint, this adventure is evident. Narayan makes Raju deliver clever and smart statements as he was becoming a saint to himself (Archana, 2016). For example, "If you show me a person without a problem, then I'll show you the perfect world" (Narayan, 1958). Narayan deleanates this sainthood in a very interesting way in Raju. Raju is hypnotized by his own power of speech and dreams himself growing in stature (Archana, 2016). At the end of the novel Narayan feels a softness towards Raju and for that he has represented him positively at last. At the same time Jannat and Rayhan finds (2018), "Waliullah presents Majeed as an extremist exploiting the religion but at the same time becomes sympathetic rationalizing Majid's purpose to whom religion means food and shelter." However, Majid is represented as a negative character by Waliullah to the end of the *Lalsalu*.

Thus, a number of researches are available on both the novels, but there is yet no research between these two. This paper attempts to do an inter-literary comparative study between *The Guide* and *লালসালু (Lalsalu)*. As *লালসালু (Lalsalu)*, the bengali novel is more accepted, this paper chooses this version instead of the less accepted transcreation *Tree Without Roots*. A number of excerpts from Lalsalu are inscribed in bengali in the paper with their translations in English.

3. RAJU, THE FAKE SWAMI AND MAJID, THE FAKE KHADEM

This is the central part of the paper. Considering the religious deceit and disguise and through comparative study between Raju of *The Guide* and Majid of *Lalsalu*, this part seeks for the answers of the research questions mentioned earlier.

3.1. Reason/s behind the Operation of Pseudo-religion by Raju and Majid

At the beginning of both of the novels both R.K. Narayan and Syed Waliullah have dramatically depicted how Raju and Majid become 'Swami' and 'Khadem'. Narayan has created a situation where Raju, a jail-released former tourist and heroine's guide, gets the opportunity to act like a saint by the help of ignorant 'Velan'. By his telling stories, learnt from her mother or from the tourists in his early life, to Velan he seems a saint, a philosopher. While in chapter one Velan is trying to touch Raju's feet, Raju says, "I'll not permit anyone to do this. God alone is entitled to such a prostration. He will destroy us if usurp His rights" (Narayan, 1958). Hearing this statement and previous story Velan is convinced with the idea that Raju is of course a saint, a 'Swami'. Even Raju himself "[feels]

he [is] attaining the stature of a saint" (Narayan, 1958). And after being the reason behind the marriage of Velan's sister almost by doing nothing, Raju becomes the 'Swami' for the villagers. In the case of Majid in *Lalsalu* Waliullah has depicted the picture in a different way.

He first describes the harsh situation of Majid who works as a 'Muajjin' (the man in a mosque who recites Azaan) in a land where there is only drought, infertility and no amusement of life. So, to have a better living he comes to 'Mohabbatnagar'. Finding an old graveyard, he declares to the villagers that that is the 'Mazar' (a Muslim shrine or enshrined tomb (Merriam-Webster. (n.d.). Mazar., 2020) of the Modaccher Pir. He says, "আপনারা জাহেল, বেএলেম, আনপাড়হ। মোদাচ্ছের পীরের মাজরকে আপনারা এমন করি ফেলি রাখছেন?" (All of you are ignorant, unlearned, uneducated. How can you be so uncareful, so rude to the Mazar of Modaccher Pir?) (Waliullah, 2006). Thus, with this statement Majid becomes able to make the religious-fearing villagers to feel guilty for not knowing about the Holy Mazar. He then also says that he has come from the land faraway from where it takes three days to reach Mohabbatnagar by foot, only because Modaccher Pir himself has commanded Majid to come to this land, to save the unlearned, darkened people in dream: তিনি একদিন স্বপ্নে ডাকি কহিলেন..... (In my dream Modaccher Pir ordered me to come here) (Waliullah, 2006).

After this the villagers being felt guilty makes the graveyard clean and turn it into a well- knitted Mazar by covering it with a red cloth (Lal salu). Then with the incident with Dudu Mia, father of seven sons, he even manages to secure a parallel place to Khaleque Bepari, the 'madbor' (Head of a village who has the authority to settle quarrel among people). When Majid finds both Dudu Mia and his son without circumcision, he pinches Khaleque Bepari more than any other by saying, "আপনাগো দেশটা বড় জাহেলের দেশ।" (You and your people are so ignorant) (Waliullah, 2006).

In both the beginnings of the novels the condition of Raju and Majid are first described. Though it seems that Raju is not a guilt like Majid because Majid has had a well plan to befool the villagers, both of them are on the same track in terms of their need. They both are in a state where they want to lead a life of happiness and pride. Existentialism is in action for both Raju and Majid, but their modes are different. Raju in his previous life has had all the opportunity to make his life the best a man can have in contemporary India, but for his greed he has to be in two years of imprisonment. Then again, finding an opportunity to make fool of the innocent, uneducated villagers of Mangala, he has forgotten his previous crime. He simply begins to float

with the wind unlike his past life when he was always against the general, traditional path of the world. On the other hand, Majid, in his previous life has led the life of poverty, more importantly of loneliness. Now he wants to make the religious-fearing villagers of Mohabbatnagar fool to be a prosperous figure, to be the Khadem of the Mazar of Modaccher Pir. Majid's pseudo-religious operation is also the result of his existentialism, but this is quite opposite to Raju. He now wants to change the world around him for his need and desire. So, in a way or other both Raju and Majid are equally guilty in taking and/or creating the chance to befool superstitious, innocent and religious-fearing people of villages both in India and Bangladesh. However, it is important to note that villagers of Mangala already have the practice of fearing God before the entry of Raju.

It can be said as people begin to believe Raju as a Swami on their own. On the other hand, people of Mohabbatnagar did not have that kind of religious practice. Dudu Mia and his son's event reflects it. Majid is the one who himself makes people compel to believe in his made story of Modaccher Pir. Thus, he changes the whole scenario of the village. Once there were people without circumcision, but after the establishment of Maktab (Where basically Holy Quran is taught): "শস্যের চেয়ে টুপি বেশি, ধর্মের চেয়ে আগাছা বেশি" (There are more tupees than heads, more weeds than religion) (Waliullah, 2006). Just like this Raju also tries to make his mask of sainthood to the ignorant villagers permanently. For this, he thinks about his outlook as a Swami: "[….] his spiritual status would be enhanced if he grew a with intent like Majid. The whole village of Mangala now believe Raju as a real Swami. Archana (2016) notes, "Raju manages himself to the enforced character of the saint and his followers beard and long hair to fall on his nape. A clean-shaved close-haired saint was an anomaly" (Narayan, 1958). Thus, he also has become ersatz saint also ply him systematically with presents and food."

It is a difficult job to consider and compare the fake religiousness in *The Guide* and *Lalsalu* where there are two different religions as well as two different cultures in two different countries, India and Bangladesh (East Pakistan). However, their existentialism and pseudo-religious operation make the path to cheat. For Majid, this is the way of leading a prosperous life. He changes the ideology of the village Mohabbatnagar from simplicity to fear. He is a perfect pseudo-saint. "In, pseudo-religious activities, the name of God and Mazar are used as the income source by pseudo-saints. They use religion as their business capital. It seems that they invest it (religion) on people" (Walid & Islam, 2018). After being free from two years of imprisonment, Raju's existentialism changes him from his previous mode. Now, he stops to change the world because this

will bring him his fortune. The difference is that Majid has to insert fear in the minds of village people, but people of Mangala already have the fear. Raju is adding fuel to the fire. The most focused objective of both the authors is not to attack the religions in any particular culture. Rather, both of them are similarly successful to convey the message how pseudo-religion makes people more superstitious. In the case of Raju it is evident that this is a reciprocal process as the unlearned, uneducated, darkened, religious-fearing, superstitious, and unconscious society can open the path for anyone to exploit the religion for his/her own accord. This is true whether the society is of Hindu or of Muslim or of any other religion. Raju in *The Guide* has not had a plan to make the villagers fool and make his livelihood from that at the outset. Rather, Velan along with all other villagers has prompted Raju to act like a Swami. He just has taken the best out of the opportunity. Similarly, the villagers of Mohabbatnagar could also have ignored Majid by avoiding his speech about Modaccher Pir, but they are as ignorant as the villagers of Mangala.

3.2. Narayan and Waliullah's objectivity towards Raju and Majid

R.K. Narayan and Syed Waliullah both have selected fictional settings in these two novels but they are carrying the true characteristics, the true picture of rural India and rural Bangladesh, rural Hindu people and rural Muslim people respectively. Waliullah has described Mohabbatnagar as a village of rural East Pakistan/Bangladesh which is also even common in today's Bangladesh. The ignorance and fear of God of the rural people are the trump card for Majid. These elements are also found in Mangala in *The Guide* as the opportunity giver for Raju. However, Narayan has gone more than this. He at the end of the novel has shown the whole media of India along with some international journalists have come to broadcast or publish the starvation of Raju to remove the drought on the land.

Here Narayan might focus on the ignorance of the people also in the national level. But Waliullah is very much conscious while dealing with this. He has been able to keep the religious-fearing in a particular area of Bangladesh. For this he has been able also to focus more deeply on one particular subject. Moreover, Jannat and Rayhan (2018) for this compact narration of the novel have also considered *লালসালু (Lalsalu)* as a novel against colonialism. Yes, of course Narayan in the novel *The Guide* has not focused only pseudo-religion and/or fake-saints, but if the theme of pseudo-religion is concerned Waliullah can be considered more compact for being able to keep his focus on a single matter. However, his objectivity over the characterization of Majid is a matter of debate.

Now, it would be fair to compare Narayan and Waliullah's way of ending the novel as well as the final judgment they deliver about Raju and Majid. On one hand, Waliullah has finished his novel in a point where the fake religiousness is shown as a continuous part of the contextual society. When at the end a peasant is crying for the heavy rain causing the destruction of the crops, Majid says –"নাফরমানি করিও না। খোদার উপর তোয়াক্কল রাখো" - (Don't be a disobedient to Allah. Be faithful to Allah) (Waliullah, 2006). At this nobody in the village is able to speak against Majid as he is the representative of Allah himself. Thus, Waliullah has described the exploitation as an ongoing matter in the society where pseudo-religion prevails. This is obviously correct as this kind of Mazars are even common in today's Bangladesh.

On the other hand, R. K. Narayan has finished his novel by making Raju transcend to a spiritual guide from a fake Swami. Because of the drought Raju, the Swami has to perform a ritual fast standing in a knee-deep water for fifteen days for a verbal miscommunication. To stop a quarrel among the villagers' he asks Velan's brother to inform that if they do not stop quarrelling, he will not eat, but villagers get the wrong message. They are told by Velan's brother that without rain the saint (Raju) will not eat anything. Raju then is compared to Gandhi: "Your penance is similar to Mahatma Gandhi's. He has left us a disciple in you to save us" (Narayan, 1958). However, at the beginning he is shown as a cheat by eating foods at evening when he is alone, but after the fifth day he is portrayed as a changed, real spiritual, purified man.

He feels moved by the recollection of the big crowd of women and children touching his feet and by the thought of their gratitude. He begins to starve in real for the well-being of nature and the people. Narayan has used Hinduism to the purification of Raju. Water and ritual fast are two holy sources of purification in Hinduism. The fast of each day seems to dry up Raju's sins and the water purifying his soul by washing away its dirtiness. After five days Raju feels, "enraged at the persistence of food thoughts" (Narayan, 1958) . Thus, he carries on starvation not for himself but for the people, for the nature to bring down rain from the heaven. He even remembers his mother's statement: "If there is one good man anywhere, the rains would descend for his sake and benefit the whole world" (Narayan, 1958). He once said, "When the time comes; everything will be all right. Even the man who would bring you the rain will appear, all of a sudden" (Narayan, 1958). In this way, he is trapped in his own statement which he delivered to befool them once. Here, Hinduism's popular belief of Karma is portrayed here by Narayan. Thus, Narayan has

shown Raju to be transcended into a real, purified persona from the fake Swami. Also, Narayan's using of Hindu context of India for the purification is also important as it might be taken as a suggestion to Narayan's own standpoint of the nature or the power of the real religiousness to transform a cheat to a spiritual, purified one.

Thus, Waliullah's representation of Majid at the end of *Lalsalu* is different from R.K. Narayan's representation of Raju at the end of *The Guide*. Where, Narayan has shown the possibility of the fake Swami Raju's purification through the religion (i.e. Hinduism), Waliullah has ended the novel by showing Majid carrying the pseudo-religion as an everlasting prevailing in Majid. Narayan, has transformed his protagonist from a cheat to a purified soul, but he cannot transform the society of the text to a learned one. Archana (2016) states, "Narayan appears to advice here that every human being has some noble feelings which are never ceased and therefore a sinner can also change into a Saint." In this way Narayan objectifies Raju in an interesting manner, from a bad to a purified man. In the case of Waliullah the representation of Majid is agnostic. As the past life of Majid is depicted in the novel with mystery, there remains no way to justify Majid. Where Raju is portrayed as an anti-hero (Rani, 2013), Majid remains as a villain in *Lalsalu*.

3.3. Raju and Majid's Perception of Women

To understand the characteristics of Raju and Majid clearly, it is very significant as well as helpful to analyze both these characters' attitude towards female characters. In *The Guide* Raju has been consistently a womanizer. His love for Rosie, the female protagonist, is obviously out of sexual desire. Which is why, he becomes ignorant of her desires when she begins to live with him. Rather, he begins to gamble with the money they get by the dance performances of Rosie. He never asks permission to set engagements of Rosie with other. Rosie states, "Narayan appears to advice here that every human being has some noble feelings which are never ceased and therefore a sinner can also change into a Saint" (Narayan, 1958). Raju has deprived Rosie of the minimal liberty; she cannot have any individual space. She even thinks of suicide: "I think the best solution for all concerned would be to be done with the business of living. I mean both of us. A dozen sleeping pills in a glass of milk, or two glasses of milk" (Narayan, 1958). Raju thus stands for the highest representative of male chauvinism. Even at the beginning of the novel when Velan talks about his sister Raju thinks of himself, "I wish I had asked him what the age of the girl was. Hope she is uninteresting. I have

had enough trouble in my life" (Narayan, 1958). Here, Narayan might want to describe how instinctively, Raju is a womanizer or at least a lady-lover. This statement also suggests that he does not feel any kind of repentance for the forgery he has done with Rosie. Interestingly, Raju's mother is portrayed as the holder of the Indian tradition (Pushpanathan, 2017). However, Raju never cares for his mother. He starts to live with Rosie in his house without his mother's consent. His mother is bound to live her house for his son. She has emotion to the house not feeling that it is her house actually. Rather, she thinks that this house was built by her husband. She is not given a name in the novel. Thus, in the whole novel women are violated, not physically but psychologically.

Similarly, Majid in *Lalsalu* is also found to be a lady lover. He has come to this new life not to be a real prophet but to be a prophet-like character enjoying all the necessities just like a wealthy common man, like 'Khaleque Bepari'- the 'Matobbar' of the village. In reality Majid has enjoyed more than even Khaleque Bepari, and to fulfill this necessities woman is a must. His marrying to Rahima remains unproductive as they cannot have any child. So, he somehow manages Rahima to agree on his proposal of new marriage. Thus, he marries 'Jamila'- a young, under-aged girl as his second wife who at first considered Majid as the father of the bridegroom. Even in a scene before his second marriage when Rahima and 'Hasunir-maa' (mother of Hasuni) was working together in the yard, he feels sexual waving in himself watching the back of Hasunir- maa in the red light. "ঈষৎ লালচে উঠানের পশ্চাতে দেখে হাসুনির মাকে, তার পরনে বেগুনি শাড়িটা। যে আলো সাদা মসৃন উঠানটাকে শুভ্রতায় উজ্জ্বল করে তুলেছে, সে আলই তেমনি তার উন্মুক্ত গলা-কাঁধের খানিকটা অংশ আর বাহু উজ্জ্বল করে তুলেছে। দেখে মজিদের চোখ এখানে অন্ধকারে চকচক করে।" (In the reddish light Majid sees mother of Hasuni wearing a purple sari in the yard. This is the same light which has made the yard brighter, has also made mother of Hasuni more attractive by brightening her upper neck and sleeves. Seeing this Majid's eyes become also brighter even in this darkness.) (Waliullah, 2006).

Thus, Waliullah has made the character Majid having much sexual desire in his deepest part of the heart who for many years had been reserving his sexual thirst. Jamila is the first revolutionary female character of Bangladeshi novel (Shekhar, 2006). For this, she becomes the nemesis to Majid. So, regarding their attitude toward female both Raju and Majid are almost same. The difference is that Raju, enjoying in the previous life the pleasure of woman, now is trying to hold it. On the contrary, Majid is now taking the full opportunity to enjoy the pleasure of woman as he had been deprived of that in his previous life.

4. CONCLUSION

Pseudo-religion in both *The Guide* and *লালসালু (Lalsalu)* is initiated mainly by Raju's and Majid's existentialism as their selfhood comes first to them. For his existence Raju at last begins to live life without changing his surroundings. On the contrary, Majid starts a new world in Mohabbatnagar by establishing fear in villagers' minds. Both Raju and Majid in two different novels are proved to be male chauvinist. No woman is respected by them. Neither Raju's mother nor Majid's wives get the least respect from them. Rather, Rosie and Jamila are severely tortured both mentally and physically for their free will by Raju and Majid respectively. However, creating the character of Raju, Narayan has shown great objectivity. He very smartly makes Raju an anti-hero with the incorporation of Karma of Hinduism. On the other hand, Majid remains a villain to the readers by Waliullah. Majid is not seen even once to be feared of the matter that whatever he is doing are all false. He is feared only when there arises any risk to loose his ersatz saint position.

This comparative study between Raju from *The Guide* and Majid from *লালসালু (Lalsalu)* results in some interesting points. The society, culture, religion of the characters of these two novels are different, but Mangala's blindness in pseudo-Hinduism is just similar to the blindness in pseudo-Islam of the villagers in Mohabbatnagar. Ignorance, superstition and blind faith in religion are the main reasons for making path for coveted people like Raju and Majid to befool them. Though, Narayan and Waliullah have been different in their dealing of the characters, they are conveying the same message considering religiously. In both the characters of Raju and Majid patriarchy and male chauvinism is vivid. This comparative study is a medium to illustrate a message about fake religiousness. This study illustrates that the darkened people of a darkened society is a thing to be exploited easily in the name of any (pseudo)religion and to be a medium of income for the coveted people of the same society.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

This study opens up some more opportunities for further studies.

1. Further study on Feminist elements in *Lalsalu* can be done.
2. Psychological loophole of Majid in *Lalsalu* is an interesting research matter.

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