

I. Imitation of Western Culture

Nilanjana Mandal (Nila), a graduated girl of Indian culture, in Taslima Nasrin's *French Lover* seems to be dissatisfied with her own cultural root. Being dissatisfied with her own native culture, Nila decides to practice western culture (especially French in this book) and tries to give up her original cultural root. Her rage, depression and dissatisfaction towards her own culture, here suggests that there is so many evil aspects in Indian society. The sub continental cultures, the protagonist, Nila finds is full of gender discrimination, and social injustices. The social system of Indian culture in the eye of an educated girl, inferiorizes the women by giving them the stereotypical images: women as emotional passive and mysterious being. On the contrary, the western culture as Nila gets, is the place of equality, self freedom and human dignity.

In her latest novel *French Lover*, Taslima Nasrin has made her heroine as rebellious of the existing system of her society. As an educated girl of modern society, Nila finds lots of problems and weaknesses in the Indian culture. The Indian males are selfish, chauvinist and lustful and women on the other hand, support the patriarchal status quo. In her reading of non-western culture, Nila finds that the status of women is very pitiable. They are supposed to be mere facilitator to men, and they don't have their self identity. Moreover, in this society, women are treated as sub-human or they are categorized as animals. Women are living by suppressing their wills and expectations. But from now on, the modern educated women, would not be ready to follow the patriarchal system as their female predecessor has done. They rather revolt against such wild practice of sub-continental culture.

Therefore, Nila in this novel, breaks the wall of marriage culture of Indian

society by leaving her husband. The Indian dogmatist husband becomes barrier for consuming her life freely since she leaves him and tries to embrace the foreign culture that she feels is full of social justice, self-freedom and human dignity.

Taslima Nasrin, in this novel, has tried to show the cultural differences between western and non-western societies. And Nasrin has shown a vast gap between the two societies with the regard of woman status. Nasrin, here analyzes the sub continent culture from the view of an oppressed woman. By presenting the oppressed female character in her novel, Nasrin wants to state that her protagonists fascination with European culture means her search for self identity and freedom since she has been ignored in her own original culture.

Taslima Nasrin, one of the remarkable literary figures in the zone of non-western literature, always revolts against the patriarchal system of Indian society. She has expressed her rage towards the male dominated sub-continental society through her various works. Such as essays, novel, autobiography, poetry etc. In fact, Nasrin wants to reform the society by revealing the bad side of sub-continental culture. Like other social reformer, in the world Taslima too. Is not far from accusation. She is charged as 'Fatwa' (an insane woman). The fundamentalist of the then society could not digest her progressive voices which satire at the uncivilized practices of the Indian culture. Therefore, they made her live exiled life in Europe. Nasrin, even being the female of Muslim society, which still insists on 'burka prtha' is always heading a step forward to her time. Her bold concept, extraordinary courage and powerful pen, obviously are the result of her straightforward expression towards the traditional society. It has been the general fact that one who does not accept the social norms as it is and tries to reform it

She has to face many difficulties. In this context, She had to face many

charges. She is accused of obscenity, immodesty and antireligious. After all Nasrin is a revolutionist who wants to bring changes and reform the socio-cultural construction of sub-continent. In spite of many accusations, Nasrin's pen is moving forward and forward unsteadily.

Due to her straightforward expression, the Bangladeshi government has censored some of her books. *Dwikandhito*, for example, is the censored book. It is banned because it reveals the hidden facts of Taslima's illicit relationship with the person who is in power. In such a way, without hesitation, Nasrin has unveiled the bad deeds of males who are supposed to be responsible for nation. Taslima's revelation of such fact accounts the truth that how women are used for male's sexual romances. Taslima Nasrin's fame rests in the content rather than the elegance of her writing. The pros and cons of her style are evident in *French Lover*, her latest novel. Like her earlier works, *The French Lover* too is the critique of the patriarchal oppression that she sees in her cultural and religious background. Nila, the representative character of Nasrin, is the heroine of her book 'French Lover' upon whom the whole story of the novel depends on. Like Nasrin, Nila also has to face many troubles and difficulties just for being an Indian women.

Nilanjana Mandal happens to marry with a Punjabi businessman who runs restaurants in Paris. After her marriage, with Kishanlal, she moves to France with the dream of freedom and independence but her life remains the same as in India. Being an Indian male, Chauvinist Kishanlal never tries to understand his wife's true spirit rather he forces to behave her as an Indian housewife even in European land. Nila, becomes intolerable with such tradition behavior of her husband and decides to break the marital relationship with her husband, so that she can feel and consume her life independently. After crossing the boundary of marriage culture, Nila starts to feel the

French society. She explores each and every corner of French society: the streets, the cafe, the people their way of life and so many other things, which fascinates her very much. And she decides to struggle in the city where people can live their life very independently and freely. She never had experienced freedom and individual dignity in India and with her husband, who never allowed women to participate in any work as men do. Realizing all these drawbacks of Indian society, she concludes that it is extremely difficult for women to make their identity in such, Socio-cultural condition. Her dreams for freedom, life, liberty and pursuit of happiness were suppressed badly in her own cultural system.

The French society and French people as Nila faces are totally different from Indian society and people. There, she gets no sign of discrimination between men and women. As women, Nila notices are all women living with their head up, since each and every woman in French Society has their own self identity. The women whom Nila meets have their own strong identity. For instance, Daniellie, later becomes her lesbian friend is a confident reporter of a local magazine. Similarly Maria, Nila's new introduced friend, heads the feminist programmes. Rita is a film director and Michelle is a good speaker for any conference but it is the matter of regret that, Nila has no her own identity if there is that is either Mrs. Kishanlal or Nilanjana Mandal, a labor. Here, Nila bitterly realizes that it is all because of the undeveloped Indian culture. After ending the relationship with her husband Nila tries to copy the European culture. Therefore she starts the homosexual relationship with Daneillie. After sometime breaks that homosexual relationship. And the game with European women could not go longer anyway. As a result, Nila waves her hands good bye to Daneillie. After leaving Kishanlal and then Daneillie Nila's life takes new turning. Her path of life arrives to get with Benoir Dupont, the French lover her dream

man. Dupont, in the beginning appears as liberal and general type of man. Nila finds her French lover as Apollo full of love and generosity. His liberating sexual desire makes Nila to compare the two culture especially, in terms of sexual behaviours. As she remembers, she never was asked to be active in their sexual games with her Indian male partners. She flashbacks the reference of Kishanlal her husband that he never had asked if she was satisfied with his sex. As the product of Indian society Nila too had conceptualized that female are not supposed to be active in sexual games, they are mere recipient. But Nila's French Lover time and again awares her to be active and satisfied in their sexual games. He every time encourages her to get full satisfaction from his sex. In this sense too, her French lover seems for more better than her husband and her Indian boyfriend, Sushanta. Benoir's methods of love making for Nila is so perfect, because he is French Lover, a European male. From her new experience of the openness of French society and her own new sexual life we can predict that she had an unsatisfactory sex life with Kishanlal.

Slowly and gradually Nila's reading of Dupont starts to result unexpectedly. Benoir was not the same as Nila had understood. His so called true love revealed into artificial, when he denies to stand as guarantor for Nila to rent an apartment in Paris. Except his mere sexual love to Nila, Benoir never behaves her as his true lover. He just takes her as a sexual creature that is used whenever one needs. Personally he is married and having a child so he never comes in agreement with Nila about their future life. Nila, now comes to conclude that all his artificial behaviour towards her is just to consume her beautiful Indian body which he feels as elixir. She further finds that her French Lover is very self fish and always priorities himself but not the women, he loves. Thus Nila's dream of French man ends and she paves the way for new world, where she can spend the rest of her life with her own self-identity.

The perfect social critic, Nasrin has received several prestigious awards from both India and abroad for her writings. Among her different reputed works, this novella. *The French Lovers* too has invited various critical receptions, from different critics. Among the numerous reviewers Shrejata Guha, is one who takes the central character as an idol of female identity in the west who wants to struggle and discovers a place in the west to fulfill her dream as female dream in reality. In this respect, she comments this novel as bold in concept and powerful in execution. She adds: "The French Lover is the fascinating glimpse into the working of women's mind as she struggle to come to terms with her identity in a hostile world".(7)

Similarly, another critics Nyle Daud finds this novel having racial and identical hierarchy in terms of third world citizens and points out that how French man expose the sexuality of racism. In this respect, Daud remarks:

Opening on a directly racist at the Charles de quell airport in Paris, as newly wed Nilanjana is given the rough ride due all third world citizens entering the hallowed porters of the west French lover smacks of an extended racism all along. Only this time round, its author Taslima Nasrin who capitalizes on the sexuality of racism, exposing all its gory details through the practices and perceptions of her heroine. (3)

For Sudipa Datta, neither the novel is racial tension, nor it is third world projection, rather it is the problem of third world women. So, she reads this very novel from feminist perspective and finds:

All the men in the book are scoundrels, the women are victims of a patriarchal society, so much so that the protagonist Nila is moved to conclude at the end: Do I have a land of my own? If your own land

spells Shelter, security, place and joy, India is not my own land . . .do women ever have a land of their own or a motherland I really don't think so. (The Hindu II)

Unlike other critics, Susan Chacko, interprets the book from multiple perspectives: He finds the problem of racism in the west male hegemony throughout the world and the position of Bengali expatriate in the west. Male hegemony one of the striking issues that Chacko finds in the novel. He views that male hegemony in reality is not limited to the third world communities rather it is the problem throughout the world. In this respect, he mentions the pitiable presence of women in the different body or the European country for this, he brings the reference of the conversations of several socially aware European women and says:

The discussion veered from male producers to female producers to female directors... from there it shot back a hundred years: Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth lady station, the suffragettes from there it was one jump to the labor movement to birth control to the numbers of women in the parliament of egalite: not even ten percent. Such a shame! Mari's nose was high in the air where she said 'me have no such hassles.(92)

Women are more than forty percent in the parliament Nicole looked crestfallen, 'Whatever happens, it's all in Scandinavia'. Maria's tone was angry: Rubbish, 'take a book at the academic position, they are all filled with men: Susan Chacko again reads the novel from the expatriate angle. In this context, he mentions the life style of those expatriate persons, their self-indulgence with their own group even within one social community, which is described as:

In one corner it was Sanal and Sunil: arguing non stop in French. The

subject was cricket [...] Sahana came and joined Nila and Chaitali. The topic was home ... a new home; markets; where one would get river fish or which shop sold the five spices that were used in Bengali cuisine. Then it was a discussion of recipes. In Kishan's group politics was nudged out and industry inched in. Salmonella in Chicken mad cow diseases! All propaganda! 'Dumn' there is no sense in running a restaurant in this country! England is the best for that. All the immigrants are migrating to Italy in hordes... where is my workforce?

(20)

From the above mentioned literature review it can be deciphered that though the novel *'French Lover'* has been analyzed and interpreted from different dimensions, the present research utilizes the change in it. Heroine's fascination with the western culture is the major focus of this research. It will also deal with the reasons of protagonist's dissatisfaction with her origin and wild practice of western culture and the difference between western and the non-western society is the major focus of this research. It will also deal with the reasons of protagonist's dissatisfaction with her origin and wild practice of western culture, though it is difficult task to change culture that already has pre occupied in one's life. Along with this, the research work attempts to deconstruct the patriarchal notion of sub-continental socio-cultural construction by showing the revolution of an educated women of modern society, against the traditional patriarchy. For this project, cultural studies and its various aspects will be helpful theoretical insights. Theoretical modality and critical analysis of the text will be discussed in the second and third chapter respectively. Finally, thesis will be summarized and concluded with findings in the fourth chapter.

II. Cultural Studies

Culture, generally denotes is the way of life. Culture signifies the custom, belief and way of social behaviors of a particular country or groups. Art music, literature etc are the foundation where culture of any country or community can grow and develop. Race, ethnicity and social identity are the determining factors of any culture. Hence, culture is one's identity and originality. The term culture, as defined by 'encyclopedia Americana' is, derived from the Latin 'cultura' and virtually all European languages have a variant of it. Culture reflects what a person is from various perspectives. In other words it is a whole way of life. Culture for Arnold is the best that has been thought and known in the world. For Tyler "culture or civilization taken in its wide ethnographic sense in that complex whole which includes knowledge ,belief, art, moral, law, custom and any other capabilities and habit acquired by man as a member of society" (Tyler). Cultural studies has an academic field includes different fields and tries to analyze these perspective from different angles. Therefore, it is very hard to find the dividing line to separate cultural studies from that of other disciplines. Cultural studies have been a multi or post disciplinary field of enquiry which blurs the boundary between itself and other 'subject'. It is a loosely connected group of tendencies issues and questions rather than a tightly coherent and unified concept of fixed agenda. The cultural studies has been employed in variety of academic disciplines like sociology, anthropology and literature in a range of geographical and institutional spaces but it is very difficult to define the term cultural studies actually what it does mean. Cultural studies pays more attention to the issue of representation. It representation the society and how the things happen in the society. Further, it also shows the cultural formation in the society and the relationship of culture with other social practices like economic and

politics. Now the cultural trends are proceeding towards globalization and this globalization is grasped in terms of the world capitalist economy the global information system, the nation-state system. Along with this, economic expansion in globalization generates the cultural transmission as well. So globalization is not just an economic matter but is concerned with the issues of cultural meanings. It is said that process of globalization is the process of cultural homogenization and it involves the loss cultural diversity.

One of the goal of anthropology has been to tell the story of culture. But the term culture is by no means as easy to define. On the one hand, anthropology has told the story of the comparative diversity, multiplicity of human cultural studies on the other hand it is a vague term to define, since it can't be delimited within a disciplined. It is very hard to find the dividing line to separate cultural studies from that of other disciplines. Cultural studies always has become a multi or post disciplinary fields of enquiry which blurs the boundary between itself and other 'subjects'. In this context Bennet says: Cultural studies is an interdisciplinary field where the perspectives from various fields can be selectively drawn to examine the relationship between culture and power (Barker, 6).

Of course there is no simple answer to the question, what is cultural studies? Because it is a broad area in itself. Colin Sparks highlights the difficulties involved in trying to define cultural studies with any degree or precision:

It is not possible to draw a sharp line and say that on one side of it we can find the proper province of cultural studies. Neither it is possible to point to a unified theory or methodology which are characteristic to it or of it. A veritable rag-bag of ideas methods and concerns from literary criticism sociology history media studies etc. are lumped

together under the convenient label of cultural studies. (Storey, 13)

Cultural studies also regards culture as a political in a quite specific sense one which reveals the dominant political position within cultural studies. John Fiske maintains that 'culture in cultural studies is neither aesthetic nor humanist in emphasis, but political' (Storey, 115)

The field of culture is for cultural studies a major site of ideological struggle; a terrain of incorporation and 'resistance'; one of the sites where hegemony is to be won to or lost. Johnson argues that 'cultural studies is political, 'but not in an immediate pragmatic sense (Storey, 125). Cultural studies allies itself with and helps theorize political action, - political action and cultural studies are not interchangeable. From and Morris make a similar point: cultural studies. . .is partisan in its insistence on the political dimension of knowledge. . . [T]he intellectual project of cultural studies is always at some level marked. . .by a discourse of social involvement' (Storey, 25).

Though some cultural critics have tried to fix the definition of cultural studies within the political project, by nature it crosses the limitation of it. In pedagogical sense too, cultural studies cannot be defined tightly since, it blurs the boundary between itself and other subjects. The study of culture has been taken in variety of academic disciplines like sociology, anthropology literature etc. In this context, Bell Hooks argues that ultimately the politics of cultural studies are to be found in its pedagogy.

Really responding to students who got see 'Do the Right Thing' and come back and say 'hook, we took your class, we understand this feminist standpoint but we also think Spike Lee is a damn brother so how do we deal with what we feel we see we saw in this particular cultural

production ? To me that's the exciting dimension of cultural studies that it can take place, not as me writing a privatized articles, but as a response to students asking what types of critical thinking allows them to engage this cultural production in a way that informs our political practice. (Storey, 33)

But pedagogy does not represent a natural site, free from the operations of power and politics. Far from being the simple transmission of ready-made information, pedagogy is a site of struggle, terrain where the complex relations between knowledge and power are worked over. Too often according to Henry A Giroux, those working in the field of cultural studies adhere to the notion of pedagogy as a transparent vehicle for transmitting truth and knowledge'. (storey, 6).

Cultural studies can ranges beyond the social exclusivity and narrowness these to include the study or popular culture. Although, cultural studies should not be reduced to the study of popular culture, it is certainly the case that the study of popular culture is central to the project of cultural studies. As Cary Nelson points out, 'People with ingrained contempt for popular culture can never fully understand the cultural project.' (Storey, 279)

With this regard to history of cultural studies, the key point to understand is that 'there is no 'absolute beginnings" and few unbroken continuities. . .what is important are the significant breaks, where old lines of thought are disrupted older constellations displaced and elements, old and new are regarded around a different set of premises and themes.' Johnson, adds his view and defines cultural studies as the study of historical forms of consciousness or subjectivity; Defined in this way it must: decentre 'the text' as an object or study. The text is no longer studied for its own sake nor even for the social effects it may be thought to produce but rather for the subject or

cultural forms which it realizes and makes available. The text is only a means in cultural studies; strictly perhaps it is a raw materials from which certain forms (e.g. of narrative ideological problematic mode of address, subject, position, etc) may be abstracted. But the ultimate object of cultural studies is not the text but the social life of subjective forms at each moment of their circulation including their textual embodiments (Storey, 97).

The absolute truths or meanings of any cultural text is almost impossible since the cultural texts and practices for all are produced by any intention. Meaning is always the result of an act of 'articulation' because meaning has to be expressed but it is always expressed in a specific context a specific historical moment within a specific discourse(s). Thus, expression is always connected to and conditioned by context. Meaning is therefore a social production; the world has to be made to mean. A text or practice or event is not the issuing source of meaning but a site where the articulation of meaning - variables meaning(s) can take place. And because different meaning can be ascribed to the same text or practice or event, meaning is always a potential site of conflict.

John Storey is of the opinion that all the basic assumption of cultural studies are Marxist. This is not to say that all practitioners of cultural studies are Marxists, but that cultural studies is itself grounded in Marxism. Marxism informs cultural studies in two fundamental ways. First, to understand the meanings culture we must analyze it in relation to the social structure and its historical contingency. Although constituted by a particular social structure with a particular history, culture is not studied as a reflection of this structure and history, (Storey, 3). Race ethnicity and culture are considered as the form of cultural identity. And the cultural identity is the concerning issue of cultural studies. Identity is meant the idea that is not fixed but

created and built on always in process a moving towards rather than an arrival. But cultural identity reflects towards the social position, identities, are totally social construction and cannot exist outside of cultural representation and acculturation. There is no such a culture, that does not use the concept of cultural identity. As Chris Barker asserts, "cultural studies tries to explore the shifting of character of cultural understanding of race and ethnicity in terms of representation and the cultural, politics of race as a politics of representation the changing form of cultural identity associated with ethnicity, the intersection between class, race and gender and the cultural legacy of colonialism". (246-47).

And representation raises the question of inclusion and exclusion. As such, it is always implicated with the question of power. On the otherhand, Dyer (1977) points us to a useful distinction between types and stereo types act as general and necessary classifications of persons and roles according to local cultural categories and stereotypes can be understood as vivid but simple representations that reduce persons to set of exaggerated usually negative characteristics (264). Representations are constitutive of culture, meaning and knowledge. After Foucault, Knowledge is always implicated in questions of social power. He stresses that power is also productive and enabling and that power circulates through all levels of society and all social relationship.

By the mid twentieth century the ethnographic definition of culture has undergone massive change. Raymond Williams contrasts this anthropological meaning of culture denoting the whole way of living of a people, with the normative meaning of culture. In normative usage, culture still claims to represent the organic voice of people. Out of this conflict between culture in the anthropological sense third way of using the term, "one that refers neither to a people's organic way of life nor to

the normative values preached by leading intellectuals but to battle ground of social conflicts and contradictions". (Graff and Bruce, 42) From the theoretical perspective one cannot assume a single central culture that renders individual experience coherent and meaningful it is inescapably different divisive and dissonant. The emergence and dissemination of post colonial criticism and the post colonial theory of discourse have made culture a most contested space. Culture now borrows the terminologies of other fields of criticism often cited terminologies these days in the study of culture are

Foucauldian notion of 'power' and 'discourse' and 'Gramsci's concept of 'hegemony' post colonial perspectives emerged from the colonial testimony of third countries and discourses of 'minorities' within the geopolitical division of east and west, north and south. They formulate their critical revisions around issues of cultural difference revisions around issues of cultural difference social authority and political discrimination in order to reveal the antagonistic and ambivalent moments within the 'rationalization' of modernity post colonial criticism bears witness to these unequal and uneven forces of cultural representation, involved in the contest for political and social authority within the modern world order. It forces us to engage with culture as an uneven incomplete production of meaning and value often composed or incommensurable demands and practices, produced in the act of social survival. Culture reaches out to create a symbolic textuality to give the alienating everyday an aura of selfhood, a promise of pleasure. As Bhaba rightly observes:

Culture as a strategy of survival is both transnational and translational. It is transnational because contemporary post colonial discourses are rooted in specific histories of culture displacement [. . .] It is translational because such spatial histories of displacement make the question of how culture signifies or what is signified by culture a rather complex issue (Bhaba 438).

The transnational dimension of cultural transformation-migration, Diaspora, displacement, relocation makes the process of culture translation a complex form of significance. It is from this hybrid location of cultural value the transnational as the translational - that the post colonial is intellectual attempts to elaborate a historical and literary project, Edward W. Said is interested in studying the relationship, between the East and West, which is governed by discourse from the cultural dimension standing in a position of a cultural critics rather than a radical political theorist. On the one hand, he sees the 'scope of orientation' as matching with 'the scope of empire' on the other hand, he focuses on culture representation as well as functioning as a form of hegemony said in this connection finds Mathew Arnold using culture as powerful means of differentiation. Culture is an ideal for Arnold but Said argues culture with its superior position has the power to authorize, to dominate, to legitimate, denote interdict and validate, in short i.e. the power of culture to be an agent of and perhaps the main agency of powerful differentiation within its domain by beyond it too" (Said 9). Culture for Said is not only the positive doctrine of merest that is thought and known but also a differently negative doctrine of all that is not best. This double faceted view of culture makes one aspect of culture more powerful than the other. Culture, thus becomes a powerful means of domination and appropriation.

Thus, it can be said that culture is a concept that includes refining and elevating element, each society's reservoir of the best that has been known and thought as Mathew Arnold put it in the 1850s. In time, culture comes to be associated often aggressively with the nation or the states, which differentiates 'us' from them' almost always with some degree of 'xenophobia' culture in this sense, is a source of identity and a rather combative entity. Culture is a sort of

theater where various political and ideological causes engaged one another being a placid realm of Apollonian culture can even be a battle ground on which causes expose themselves to the light of day and contend with one another. A prominent issue in cultural studies is to subvert the distinctions in traditional criticism between 'high literature' and 'high art' and what were considered the lower forms that appeal to a much larger body of consumers. Typically, cultural studies pay less attention to works in the established literary canon than to popular fiction, best-selling romances (that is love stories), journalism and advertising together with other arts that have mass appeal such as cartoon comics film, television \ "soap operas" and rock and rap music. And within the area of literature and the more traditional arts, a frequent undertaking is to move to the center of cultural studies work that, it is claimed, have been marginalized or excluded by the aesthetic ideology of white European or American males particularly the products of women minority ethnic groups and post colonial writers, As in new historicist criticism, politically radical exponents of cultural studies orient their writing and teaching towards the explicit end of reforming existing power writers and relations which they view as dominated by a privileged gender, race or class.

Cultural studies being a vast space, it encompasses lots of issues from different fields like Marxism, new historicism, feminism, post colonialism, multiculturalism etc. And it is difficult to include all those references in a research paper, so I want to narrow down the broad term cultural studies into one topic, multiculturalism and try to connect the text with this theory. Multi culturalism generally is the situation where two or more than two cultures merge. In this situation one loses something of one's culture and gets something of the others which leads to the situation of hybridity.

Multicultural text is a code of contents that responds to the evident multiethnic nature of contemporary western societies. It is set with an aim to introduce the different belief systems, crafts, custom and arts of the nation's heterogeneous population. Therefore, it addresses on the idea of tolerance and the respect for difference and somersault the centrality of a dominating culture. Such texts are based on the underlying values and ideas of pluralism. This is attained by the cultivation of what are commonly referred to as 'ethnic arts' and leaving the supposed authority of the hegemonic culture undisturbed. Founded on the general assumption of cultural heterogeneity multicultural texts prove that 'there are no pure cultures', all are hybrid." The recognition of this hybridity and on interaction among the difference are the major issues of such texts.

Multicultural society follows the notion of distinctiveness of each culture, everything separates from other which is challenged by modern anthropology and has been emphasized the lack of any substantive boundary between cultures. The movement known as multiculturalism has taken two distinct directions. It is known fact that the term multiculturalism always appears to be controversial, it celebrates the individual identity of any culture and ethnic group, and seeks to preserve the cultural practices of specific groups. In addition, it gives emphasis on globalization of culture where the cultural identity is determined by membership of the group that a person belongs to. So to speak of multiculturalism is to speak of society a state, a nation a country, a religion-composed of people who belong to different culture. Multiculturalism celebrates differences between cultures, races, castes, rituals and other social entities. The multiculturalism or cross-cultural ethos shows a distinct and Land deep awareness of the social, economical and cultural realities. It represent the multicultural ethos with multiplicity in thematic patterns. Multicultural perspective is

considered as very important literary characteristics by most critics and thinkers because of its ability to widen and enlarge the frontiers of thought in people. Multicultural forces reconsidered of many issues that were presumed to be post enlightenment auspices. This consideration inserts itself in to the contemporary questioning of the modernity. As the term is broad there are various words to describe the same phenomenon, the popularity of the term 'multiculturalism' is increasing to denote the same phenomenon, the popularity of the 'multiculturalism' is increasing to denote the plural society. For example the word 'cosmopolitan' also used to define the society containing the citizens who have come from all four corners of the globe and settled there. But, the reason behind this popularity is its vagueness and interdisciplinary feature. Culture now is celebrated with a distinctive way of life which despite all its deficiencies speaks directly an individual's sense of identity and belongingness. So the term not only creates the differences but also recognizes those differences as springing from a universally shared attachment of importance of culture and to an implicit acknowledgement of the equality of cultures (Watson, 2).

It is multiple in forms and always represents the multicultural ethos. Generally each country is facing the problem of multicultural environment which is truly difficult to manage. If a country is multicultural society and the people are bound up with their cultural identity then the state either should follow multiculturalism or multiculturalism in order to save the state. The nation that adopts the multiculturalism it may lead to the genocide since there is no any root of other cultures except the single one dominating the state. To support this, Watson contents that is a nation is a multicultural society and unavoidably bound up with their cultural identity, then the state, if it wants the nation to survive, can do one of two things. It can try to destroy the multicultural dimension of the society by rooting out all cultures

other than a single one which will behave dominant. At the extreme, this leads to the "bind of genocide" (Watson 3). In this age situation is unavoidable. Further more, it is an alternative way to save the nation, since in the multicultural society, people themselves are proud of their own cultural heritage. They are unwilling to accept the culture endorsed by the country. In such a country people will always be aware of the cultural diversity and sense of local belonging.

Even so some of the countries, still are rejecting the concept of multiculturalism. Such countries have the notion that minority groups will revolt for their own cultural identity and they will break the fragile unity of the country. As we know that multiculturalism is between liberal western universalism and cultural loyalties in a worldwide setting. The tension is clearly evident in many of the developing societies with tradition and cultural beliefs. Thus, one common factor that emerges here is that of thematic concern which is a question of a distinct identity. All societies today are culturally heterogeneous in different degrees. The influence on their language, aspirations pattern of consumption, life-style, self understanding and innermost fear is often so subtle and systematic that they do not even notice it. A culturally homogenous society whose members share and mechanically follow an identical body of beliefs and practices is today no more than an anthropological fiction. In some societies, cultural heterogeneity is not a result of contingent external influences but commonly grounded. These societies include several more or less well organized cultural communities each held together by a distinct body of ideas concerning the best ways to organize significant social relations and lead individual and collective lives. Such societies are multicultural ranging "from domestic contacts to global interactions and between hegemonic-western culture and developing non western societies" (Dall Mayr 14). Some cultures are based on their authority from

religion and demand respect deemed to be due to religion. And some others are ethnically based and demand respect because they are bound up with the life and history of specific ethnic groups. In others ethnicity and religion are integrally connected and provide a complex source of legitimacy. It means multicultural could be multi-ethnic or multi-religious or both. Ethnicity and religion are different in nature. Multi-ethnically constituted multicultural societies raise different kinds of problems to those raised by multi religiously constituted multicultural societies. As Graft and Bruce write, "within cultural criticism is something more than preserving, translating arid interpretation culture or cultures. Rather, the aim is to bring together in a common democratic space of discussion, diversities that had remained unequal largely because they had remained apart" (434-35).

Nationalism and multiculturalism are two terms which are loosely connected where the emphasis in one term automatically de-emphasized the other one. To Watson 'Nationalism was significant in the first half of the century. It was instrumental in persuading population within the boundaries of one nation to mobilize against those of another or in colonial circumstances to expel from within the nation dominant groups (18). After the second world war or the period of decolonization in the 1950s that multiculturalism began to make its impacts in Asia, Europe and America. Due to colonization the feeling of nationalism gradually appeared in the mind of people in India and Tanzania and people became aware of their identity and nationality. A However, after decolonization a nationalistic movement came into force and national boundaries some what seemed more or less fixed. Especially political parties, government with cause to create sentiment of national unity is people. Therefore,, the impact of such breakthrough will be seen in a national unity. Consequently within the nation the voice of different groups will rise

from the surface and different castes, communities, classes, religious groups and ethnic associations will surely begin to discover new field as the source of their identity and self, respect. But identity is a matter not only of self description but also of social ascription, Given in this normative rights, obligations and sanctions which within specific, collectives, form roles. The use of standardized "makes especially to do with the bodily attribute of age and gender, is fundamental in all societies, notwithstanding large cross-cultural variations which can be noted" (1,82-83). The terms "intercultural" and "multiculturalism" are preferred to "multicultural" and multiculturalism because the former seem to more accurately suggest the action of connecting or communicating issues, notions, beliefs values and understandings among and between different cultures.

It is true that the language and culture of minority groups is gradually disappearing due to the concept of globalization. Multiculturalism in terms of diversity and differences appear to be under threat from global convergence. The impact of globalization cannot only be seen in the field of culture but also in the field of production and consumption that affect the global capitalism. To Watson, the clearest evidence of such globalization comes from the changes in consumption pattern through the world. The ubiquitous coca cola as well as Me Donald are the best example of these trends." (69)The outcome of these global trends is more death of local creativity and locally specific goods and their replacement by reflecting western cultural preference. Multicultural world exists between the world of capital and national state in this era of globalization. And this relation could be defined as "auto-colonization" where the direct creativity of multinational capital we need to do anything with the opposing standard between metropolises and colonized countries therefore global company serve as instrument to connect those nations which are

under the treat of global capitalism. In this regard, naturally multiculturalism is the ideal form of global capitalism's ideology. It is an attitude which forms an empty global position where any local culture is discussed. In the same way that a colonizer treats a colonized people as the 'indigenous' whose nature must be studied attentively and with 'respect'. In other words, the relationship between traditional imperialist and capitalist of global auto-colonization is the same as the relationship of western cultural imperialism and multiculturalism. Just as global capitalism includes the paradox of colonization without the colonized countries of Euro-centric distance or the respect for local cultures without having any roots in its own particular culture.

Multicultural society in fact, gets birth from the act of globalization. The tendency of globalization mixes-up many cultural identities into one society. Multicultural society, therefore results into the situation of hybridity, diasporas etc. Similarly, the notion of contact zone happens to be appeared in such a multicultural place. Contact zone is the spaces within the multicultural society where different cultures meet, clash and struggle with each other in order to preserve one's own identity. It is a place where two languages and cultures meet interpret and misinterpret each other. The idea of contact zone is developed by Mary Louise Pratt in her seminal book, *Imperial Eyes*. Contact zone is defined as a social space marked by the spatial and temporal co-presence of subjects previously separated by geographical and historical disjuncture and who are trajectories now intersects. Pratt says, "contract zones are the social spaces where disparate cultures meet cash and grapple with each other often highly asymmetrical relation of domination and subordination, like colonialism slavery or their aftermaths as they are lived out across the globe today" (4). It presents how subjects are constituted in and by their relations to each other. It also talks about trans curation which is like a phenomenon of the

Contact zone.

Hybridity another related terms in the field of multicultural studies generally refers to the creation of how Transcultural forms within the contact zone produced by colonization. Hybridization takes many forms: linguistic, cultural, political racial etc. Linguistic example include pidgin and Creole languages and those echo the foundational use of the term by the linguists and cultural theorist. Hybridity for Bhabha is the 'cultural cross-over of various sorts of emanating from the encounter between colonizer and the colonized'. He defines it as the notion of the ambivalence. Ambivalence is the mixture of the colonizer and colonized where colonized people work in the consent of the colonize, In the same line of Bhabha, Ashcroft Bill and Tiffin have defined hybridity as "It describes the complex attraction and repulsion that characterize the relationship is a ambivalent because the colonized subject is never simple and completely opposed to the colonizer". (12) Bhabha in this context speaks something that cultural identity always emerges in this contradictory and ambivalent space, which he claims is a hierarchical 'purity', of cultures untenable.

It is in between space that carries the burden of meaning and culture this is what makes the notion of hybridist so important. Similarly Chris Baker writes, "The mixing together of different cultural elements to create new meanings and identities. Hybrid destabilize and blur established cultural boundaries in a process of fusion or creolization" (48). Thus hybrid cultures exists in the colonial society where there is representation of in between-ness between colonizers and colonized. So, hybridity is an expression of everyday life in the post imperial era.

The same diasporic experiences can be varied from person to person. There is found not only regret of migrated person but also the celebration upon it. But most of the non-western writers have expressed their agony through their works. Among them, Salman Rusdie, reknown writer for expressing his sense of lack in western society. Expressing his anger towards the colonizer, Rusdie adds: I have been in a monirity group all my life- a member of a Mohir - migrant family is Bombay, then of a Mohir-migrant family in Pakistan and new as a British Asian". Unlike Rusdie Hall another cultural critics does not seem so complaining about the diasporic experiences when he defines." The diasporic experience .. .is defined not by essence or purity, but by the recognition of a necessary heterogeneity and diversity; by a conception of "Identity which lives and through not despite difference by hybridity. Diaspora identities are those which are constantly producing and reproducing themselves a new through transformation and difference (119-20).

Despite its vagueness, cultural studies is an academic field where it studies and explores cultures as the signifying practices of representatives with the context of social power. The existence of cultural identities simply relies on the impact of globalization which determines the very nature of cultures. Globalization partly may dissolve the cultural identity and partly lead to the cultural hybridity. Although culture represents certain race ethnicity, domination of power. Power on the other hand also influences the trends of multiculturalism in the era of globalization. Of course, there is no one to one correspondence between the theoretical concept to be used in the analysis and my application as such. Nevertheless, understanding help to analyze the novel. I am trying to theorize my analysis with some of the key concept of multiculturalism and its umbrella term cultural studies because multiculturalism has become striking terminology not only in literature and art, but also an issue in

education, sociology, anthropology. Further multiculturalism is a newly developed concept that always promotes the individual existence of any culture on the other hand, multiculturalism follows the notion of distinctiveness of each culture and everything separate from others which is challenged by modern anthropology which has emphasized time and again the lack of any substantive boundary between cultures. On the basis of aforementioned tools, I have preceded my task to analyze the text under the title of 'Fascination, with western culture' in the *The French Lover*.

III. Fascination with Western Culture

The novella *French Lover* mainly has tried to expose numerous drawbacks of Indian sub-continental society. Taslima Nasrin's representative character Nila here seems to be dissatisfied with her own native society, Indian culture, according to Nila is underdeveloped full of male domination disordered and hierarchal. Nila's distraction to her own origin here suggests her attraction to European culture. The European society, as she finds, is quite perfect in its democratic practices. It is such a beautiful place, where self-freedom equality and human dignity can be enjoyed freely. Nila then tries to dismantle the socio-cultural wall of non-western society showing its many loopholes.

This novel especially focuses on the heroine's criticism of her own society and her appreciation of European cultural pattern. Nila, an educated girl of Indian society happens to marry with a punjabian Kishanlal on the other hand, Kishan Lal has his own self identity, he runs restaurant in Paris. Nila after their marriage moves to Paris with the dream of life, liberty and pursuit of happiness. More than this, she had the dream of self-freedom and equality that were impossible to be fulfilled in her native land. Unfortunately her dreams and desire remain unfulfilled even in the foreign land. It is all because Kishanlal is the out come of Indian society. Kishanlal has well conceptualized the Indian rules and regulations so that it is impossible to change his manners along with his geographical shift. Therefore, Kishanlal tries to impose many unnecessary burdens upon his wife. He doesn't know how to respect an educated women's will, rather he forces her to behave like a traditional Indian woman. He supposes himself to be a superior male and always inferiorize his wife. Kishanlal has well understood that the equality between man and woman is impossible since woman are always submissive servile and meek creature. Nila, on the other hand thinks

herself as intellectually superior. She is proud of her education. She has not read just to stay at home and serve her husband. Nila wants to be an independent. She wants to utilize her wit. Being economically independent she wants to share her husband's financial difficulties. In the same manner, Nila wants her social status for which the economic status is necessary. That's why Nila requests her husband for any job. But Kishanlal, a purely businessman can't take it positively and shouts at her "job? Why on earth am I not earning enough?" (55). Kishanlal has carried the notion of Indian culture. So he does not give so importance in Nila's education, rather he laughs at it: Why are you so proud of education. It's not as if you're a doctor and an engineer' (56). Kishanlal, the Indian male chauvinist can't digest the independent feelings of his wife. Therefore, he always tries to confine her within his so called luxurious apartment. Infact, Kishanlal wants his wife to be silent like a dumb girl who couldnot react even if he abuses to her', No no no an Indian wife can't talk like this' (56). In such away, Kishanlal always tries to command his wife, contrarily, Nila does not like to be the dutiful Indian wife like her grandmother and mother. She is more than those tradition -bound women who silently follow, the so called social conventions and waste their whole life for their family.

Being an educated girl of modern society, Nila has her own point of view there are many baseless and unnecessary social conventions that needed to be changed. Nasrin through her character Nila, severely criticizes the existing social system of India. She views the social code and conduct are mere discourse, constructed by male hegemony. Hindu laws and customs are totally unfavorable to woman from the very beginning of history Norms and values has been constructed by those person who were in power. Since then man has grabed all the social power on their hand and treated women as inferior to men. Hence, woman in Indian culture

are made inferior not by nature but by culture. Nasrin's hate red and resentment towards non-western society have emerged when she knew the foreign culture. And certainly, the amazing freedom of European society tempted her so much so that she appeared as the critic of her own origin. Like Nasrin, her character in this novel Nila, too revolts against the society by ending the relationship with her husband.

After knowing the real nature of her husband Nila decides to break the marital relationship and to good bye her root culture. She sees many obstacles in her culture to be progressive for a lady and jumps at once into the ocean of European culture. Her hatred and anger can be seen so clearly when she wants to forget her own existence within the beauty of French society. After leaving Kishan, Nila explores every corners of French society and gets heavenly pleasure within these places. She shows her great craze towards the surprising beauty of French society. She ran towards the museum. She felt like a tiny ant before the massive structure and surrendered the minuteness of her existence before this vastness with pleasure. She lost herself in the endless world of the Louvre(Museum). She no longer remembered that she was - Nilanjana-Mandal, daughter of Anirban Mandal of Calcutta. She did not feel her existence anymore and the occasional hand that brushed her shoulder or neck went unheade.' (67). She wants to get lost in the French society so that she would be able to enjoy her life in this beautiful city.

Nasrin here compares two different cultures and demonastrates her disagreement with Indian cultures. On the other hand, she seems to be fascinated with European culture. Throughout the novel, her heroine shows great devotion towards French social system and its perfect ness Nila indulges herself in exploring the strangeness of this wonderful society. Every corner of the street, cafe galleries and museum all enchants Nila so much that she forgets her hunger and thirst. Nila dazzles

by the extent of freedom of this land where a men kiss whom they want and dress as they please, Nila then says, 'France is the city of freedom and land of equality (34)'. There is no social ranking everyone is the same and all have their own self identity. One should not depend on others and no one interferes others affairs. No gender discrimination women too are free for doing any thing they can walk freely even in night. In terms of roaming around the French society, once Nila caught a different-looking scenes. The street bustled with people woman walked nonchalantly. There was not a trace of terror and their steps don't falter women are out in the street even at this last hour, aren't they scared? She questions and gets answer immediately scared of what? That's true Nila thinks scared of what This was not Calcutta that five lusty men or a bunch of robberies would pounce upon a girl and snatch away her money jewellery, honour or even life" (47). Nila praises the life by heart 'so wonderful! There is no darkness: everything is light bright and alive; (48)' she says again and again.

Similarly, Nila gets another wonderful fact of fashion so nice dressing style in this society everyone dresses as they please. There is no difference between man and woman's clothes. She soon remarks her own country and remarks: "But in Calcutta the difference between man and woman clothes and shoes are many. Saries salwars and slippers are for woman and dhotis, shirts T-shirt trousers ties socks and shoes are for man the difference is apparent" (51). Nila's degree of fascination with this society goes on mounting wherever she goes and whatever she finds. Nila's curious eyes now comes to be fixed on the well maintained social order. In this society every where peace and discipline are well maintained. Everyone is ready to follow the rules and regulations of the state when she sees such "peacefully ordered society, she brings the images of Indian society, that is just opposite in the comparison of French

society. As Nila remembers; "In Calcutta the buses were crammed full it was sticky and not and you got dust in your eyes and face. Here the buses are air conditioned with lots of windows and no dust at all. You have to get in by the front door of the driver (the orange ticket for the whole month) and go in. If you don't have the orange ticket then you buy the green ticket from the driver for eight francs put it into the small machines which would noisily stamp the date and time on it. Then you sit on the cushioned seats. There is no ruckus on stories about politics or the fish market or household gossip. Everyone is calm everyone wear a smile and no one pokes their nose in other people's lives" (66). The real human life can be found in this beautiful land. This society says that life is short so enjoy and laugh as much as you can. Nila after learning such human life condemns the Indian society where people aren't supposed to be laughed by heart, Nila now encourages her mother to follow such beautiful side of life. 'Ma you have wasted your entire life trying to please other people. Now you should think of yourself enjoy your own life. After grandmother died, the inheritance was split up and got a fair amount of money from selling your share who are you saving it for? Spend it- on yourself. Life is not forever. The people here have enough to eat and good clothes to wear. So they enjoy like to the hilt. They laugh heartily. And we are afraid to laugh because we are in fear why? Because some stupid man somewhere has said that if you laugh too much you'll pay for it with tears' (54). Nila, thus shows her charm towards the European livingstyle and suggests her mother to live in this manner. The western culture for Nila is the most sweet fruits and she cannot remain without testing it. Therefore, Nila westernizes herself and initiates the western habits like drinking, kissing, dancing, music song operas and shaking hands etc. Those habit in the Indian societies are almost restricted, it is supposed as anti-cultural act. For example, the drinking habit in Indian

society is assumed as bad habit. It is said that only bad people drink alcohol. But in this amazing city of freedom Nila realizes you need never do anything secret. 'In this city she notices it is wrong not to drink; people think you are uncultured and uncivilized'(84).

Nilā starts homosexual acts one of the western habit with European girl. Daneillie with the company of Daneillie, Nilā feels great pleasure though there is more difficult life than in Kishanlal's luxurious apartment. Nilā feels so happy that she never felt in her household life, challenging to Indian social barriers, Nilā laughs at Kishanlal's dogma: 'so you want to keep an Indian servant. Now where is she Kishanbabu?'(81). She takes off her Indian clothes throws it and adopts the new European clothes. It shows her blind attachment to European society, 'Nilā gets into a pair of blue jeans, a red shirt and a denim jacket' (81). Nilā first time during her life realizes an unimagined comfort in those clothes. Nilā learns most of the western habit from her lesbian friend Daneillie. From the very beginning, Daneillie teaches the European culture to Nilā. Nilā is taught how to behave in restaurant party invitation and in street. You must thank who serves you if you don't thank him/her it is quite obvious that you are insulting the people. So don't forget giving people their due credit. In this land of equality everyone is the same. Some have better jobs and some don't but everyone has their human dignity. Nilā says to herself 'that's how it should be' (86). Nilā, is identified with wonderful sexual activities. She collects strange sexual experiences with her homosexual partners Danellie. In fact, Nilā is from India where sex is defined in narrow sense. There sex is assumed just for male satisfaction. So in the beginning Nilā used to be very shy about sexuality. In reality, all Indian women feel that it is all one topic which is taboo, secret and private. And most people in India believe that sex is mainly for man and all that the women would get

out of it is child. But 'overhear girls and boys kiss anywhere in public place this angers Nila as much as it delights her. She is happy that they don't hide their love and demonstrate openly. On the other hand, she is angry thinking how much she had lost by growing up in such a restrictive society' (117). Nila, on her way gets chances to witness another interesting event. 'In a bus a couple get into the bus with a child in a pram, the baby slept while the couple kissed in front of the busload. (66). Nila assumes it as an intimate kiss it is a French Kiss' (66). Actually the couple kissing scene tempts her from inside so she too wants to be kissed like that, "she wanted such a handsome young man to love her hug her and kiss her as deeply"(67).

Nasrin has spent most of the pages of this book *French lover* in narrating the sexual openness of French society. Nila's sexual discoveries in new society tells us something strange, the lesbian sex, gay sex and people kissing in public place have really made, her exhausted. Time and again, she compares the sexual behavior of French society and Indian society, and finds the unsatisfactory result from her own society. Sex in Indian society is treated as a secret game that should be done only in bedroom or secluded spot. And the openness of sex is likely taboo in this society. But in the French society the opposite is true Nila doesn't find the whole sexual thing is unattractive at all. Since there is more sexual freedom, Nila feels, sex crimes are less here. The case with which woman can walk around here is impossible to find in India. Nila can dress as she pleased.' If she wants to be naked why shouldn't she have the freedom? Even if woman covered themselves even if adds are sexless men would get aroused. It is more important for people to respect one another. . .Nila feels sexuality is a kind of assets. . .Nila is hungry for love and sexuality is important to get that love'. (280)

Notably, Nasrin wants to deal with the cultural diversity of the western and non-western countries. With this regard she introduces the different belief systems, custom and social behavior. The cultural heterogeneity and protagonist's embracement treated by it is another remarkable point that Nasrin has highlighted in this book.

Occasionally this book comes across as deadpan humour. For evidence some of the cultural conflicts are entertaining as when Nila is invited to dinner at a French European woman's house. 'Nila now realizes it was impossible to chew the bland chunk of meat. She tried sprinkling it with salt and pepper like everyone else. But the meat was still tasteless. Everyone else was exclaiming over it. Nila ate some mashed potato and half a lettuce leaf and got the smell of the meat out of her mouth. Then the cheese sether back to square one. Meanwhile, everyone had torn off pices of the bauguette and kept it beside their plate with experienced and civilized fingers. They pierced the cheese with their fork, picked up a bite of the bauguette on to it and expertly passed it into their mouth. The Bauguette was lolling on the dusty table. It was impossible for Mila to eat it' (94).

Due to the varied civilization, Nila has to face with lots of difficulties and uncomfortable in many places. She does not know many western habits which can be taken as normal, Since, she is from different cultural background. But Danellie takes advantages of it and insults Nila. Nila immediately feels inferiors to herself in front of the European woman's and apologize for her mistakes, though she has not committed any wrong. Nila's voice was humble. 'Danellie I know it was wrong. It won't happen again please forgive me' (86). When Nila tries to imitate the western habits each time she is laughed at her European companies. In her efforts to make her friends happier, Nila pretends of knowing French language and speaks randomly.

But no one understand what she means. Finally when Danellie corrects Nila's sentences, 'everyone rolls with laughter' (93). In the mist of her European friends, Nila always feels like a joker. At the same dinner party, there is shown another disaster that Nila had to encounter. 'Two dogs pounced on her Nila screamed and ran for life; the whole room burst into laughter. Danellie, called out to one picked it up and began to kiss it. Nicole picked up other one and began to rock it as if she was soothing a baby... No one in that house had ever seen anything as strange as someone screaming instead of hugging dog. The way the five pairs of eyes were observing her, Nila felt they suspected her to be crazy' (89).

Nasrin has picturized the cultural conflicts and its psychological impacts upon those migrated people in the European land. But like other exiled writers of third world countries, Nasrin never shows her regret for being dislocated in the alien world. We know well that those exiled writers have shown hatred against the European culture through their works. Among them, V.S Naipul, Salman Rusdie and Michael Ondaatje are all the well known writers who often deal with the issue of fragmentation, Physical dislocation, and cry for the root and return to the past. But Nasrin foregrounds a complete reversal issues of those writers. Nasrin mostly abuses their origin and shows various weakpoints, with the help of Nila, Nasrin's character in this novel. Nila never longs for her root she rather shows her blind attraction towards the French society. In this text, European culture is idealized and their beliefs and values have become a role model for the third world citizens. In spite of being insulted, Nila shows her great attraction with the French culture. Instead of hating the European culture, Nila rather expresses her dissatisfaction and resentment with her native society. 'She would not go back to that filthy society in Calcutta. If she returned to her father's house it would dishonor the family name and if she stayed

anywhere else in that city people would call her new names' (176). Calcutta, for Nila is the city of uncivilized, it is dirty full of dishonor. 'Nila feels it looks like a little finger, there is more filth on the footpaths, the air is a little more polluted, there is more traffic on the roads, the incessant honking seems a little louder. The houses look move worn out with paint peeling off the shops smaller more cramped damp and the people darker, there is less grass in the field '(131).

Nilanjana, is now in French society and she has achieved the extent of freedom, so she does whatever she likes. Here Nila is characterized as an unstable creature. She wonders here and there without any determinations. She can't accept the ground reality and feels the daily life, repeated task so monotonous. Therefore, after her husband she leaves Danellie, her lesbian friend too. Actually, Nila wants to consume her life freely, she wants to merge in the very society so that she could live her life beautifully. Nila is shown totally helpless, after leaving Danellie. But coincidentally on her way Benoir Dupont appears, stretching his helping hands towards her. Nila's dream of French lover comes to be true when she meets him. It is at this point she meets Benior Dupont, a blonde, blue-eyed handsome Frenchman and is swept off her feet. Benoir introduces Nila to the streets the cafes and the art galleries of paris and Nila finds that the doors to a whole new world have opened before her. Actually Benior is not like the Indian males Anirban (her father) Kishan (Nila's ex-husband) rather he is a liberal as well as generous. Nila finds him as the man of having wide heart. He believes in equality, he has no idea of domination and no any feelings on male superiority. Benior, according to Nila is a extra ordinary types of man he always respects woman and her desires. He shows great enthusiasm to uplift woman's status. Nila thinks it is because he is from European cultures. Benoir is the greatest achievement of Nila since he has brought the meanings of her life. More than

this Nila has well understood the real value of sex in human life due to Benoir's strange sexual behaviours. Nila now has become able to evaluate that sex is the most decent and beautiful things in the world. Benior everytime encourages her to get full satisfaction from his sex. As long as she remembers, Kishanlal never used to ask if she was satisfied with his sex. He only knew that is the hero of their sexual game and his satisfaction is everything. But her Benoir is not such like Kisan, he frequently asks

Mila to be active in their sexual game. Nila therefore thinks he is not Benoir, "this is her Apollo loving his Aphrodite deeply intimately" (183) Benoir's sexually liberating behaviour brings radical change in Nila's thoughts she learns an important lesson that like male, females too can be active player in the game of sex. When she goes back to her past, she finds her passive role. 'Earlier with her Indian male partner Nila used to lying flat and passive she thought that was the rule of the game, she would lie with her eyes shut and the man would climb on her body and take his pleasure (184)'. But Benoir's liberating sexual behaviours teaches her how to quench unfulfilled sexual thirst. Hence, Benoir, for Nila is that person, who only can extinguish her passion. 'Nila feels he is that prince of her dreams who would come and carry her away on horseback. This is that palace and he is her prince' (186). Nila's pleasure has no bound when she is loved by French, this very French love is beyond the comparison 'she had never even imagined that in this cruel grotesque world love could be so intimate sex could be so perfect' (170). The love making style of Benoir is totally different than those of Indian males. There is significance in his kiss. No one had ever kiss like that. Benoir admires Nila by heart, 'you are so beautiful Nila oh Nila the lord has made you with great care. (170). It's really surprising when Nila is called 'beauty'. Nila is an Indian Lady and naturally she is dark, but Benoir says her beautiful. The world knows that white skinned -person hates the black one. But Benoir's

behavior is reversal, he says: 'Your color is beautiful, your skin is smooth, your hair is so black so deep dark black. Your breast. I have never seen such breast like a pair of melons you will drive me crazy' (183). Nila realizes herself that her life has got a perfect shape. Before Benoir, she had no valuable life, but now she has got the essence of life along with Benoir. Benoir's 'love is her pride she would not tell him about any of her humiliations.

Nila had lost everything and in that losing she had lost the pain of losing. Nila desperately wanted to alive. In this grotesque world, Nila would walk hand in hand with beauty and head for her dreams" (202). Benoir's sex resembles true love to Nila. Nila thinks of sushanta, (her ex-lover) had said he loved her but never had he made love to her like this. Benoir had an artist within he was different from all the man in the world or did all Frenchman love their woman thus? Nila did not know but she was drowning in love" (203). Nila never felt bore with Benoir's sex rather her passion remained unfulfilled. She has got unusual pleasure since she is convinced that 'these people love truly and this true love made her life worth living it gave meaning to her life' (203). Nila really has gone mad with French man's company. 'Love had let her wings and she wanted to fly out of the window tell every soul on the street that she was not alone any more. She was not being used someone really loves her, truly loves her (203)'. Nila investigates the male behavior of both countries; western and non-western and finds that European male like Benoir is quite enthusiastic, liberal and understanding, contrarily, the Indian males are biased selfish and rude in their behavior. Nila then thinks a "love become different if the man happens to be blonde and handsome and the kiss the French kiss" (178).

Benoir's Nila liaison takes place for many days. Benoir takes Nila to visit around various places. Even outside their home Benoir without hesitation demonstrate

his love "When the Indian beauty came down to the 'closerie deslilies (a restaurant) the Frenchman started at her wide eyed and almost flew to greet her gathers her in his arms and sink his tongue deep into her mouth. Their tongue spoke to one another. They drank each other essence like nectar" (178). Nila is taken a back to see a man so conscious of his partner's sexual gratification. In India she had never heard of such an awareness. When she had. Sexed for the first time with Sushanta, her lover, he had never asked her if she had felt the same exciting thrill that he had. "Most people in India believe sex is mainly for men and all that the women would get out of it is children' (254).

Benoir is found to be ready to do anything for the sake of his love. He speaks words of love, kisses her every now and then. He says 'Ladies first' and makes way for Nila,"-serves her and even cleans the house and vacuumed it. He does all these things without feeling inferior since he is not an Indian male. Here he seemed to be hurried to leave his wife Pascle and his darling daughter Jacqueline. He does these all things as he says, to just for Nila's sake. Nila feels pride due to this man she had not to be rootless or beggar in this foreign land. She knows well that no one would be able to make her such happy that if Benoir had not catch her finger. Benoir on the other hand assumes himself as the happiest person in the world by getting Nila's love.' Oh Nila you really love me so much, 'I am really lucky to have your love". (281). Benoir with Nila's company has forgotten everything including his wife and daughter and speaks in his emotion. I will marry you Nila, you will be my wife. I will divorce Pascale tomorrow.'(287).

In this way, the most of the pages of this novel has covered the sexual details. Nasrin describes the sexual affairs between a French man and an Indian women, paying high attention. Her heroine accepts the French love as the elixir of life. She

feels heaven like-life with this French man's company. She has collected an immense pleasure of love from that person's liberating sexual behavior. Nila's satisfaction with Frenchman's sex and her hatred with the Indian male suggests that 'She had unfulfilled sex life with Kishan and other character is equally unhappy with theirs. It is universal fact that when anything gets into climax, it has to fall one day. The same incident, it has seen in Benoir-Nilas love affair both of them they love truly one another but their so-called true love can't exist any longer. Slowly and gradually, their love starts to walk on the negative path.

Nilā finds out Benoir' vested interest within his so-called true love. His true love turns to be artificial and mere sexual. Though he shows his great devotion towards Nilā, he never comes in agreement about their future. He is willing to leave his wife for her but too stingy to stand guarantor so she can rent an apartment. The relationship ends when Nilanjana realizes that Benoir's first priority is himself and not the women he loves. And finally she decides to abort the child she is bearing and stopped the relationship with him. "Nilā's French lover walked out, her handsome man with his blue eyes, blonde hair walked out". (291)

Even though she is deserted by Benoir, she shows no sign of regret rather she celebrates the tragic event 'she stood at the window and looked out at the greens, reds, yellows of nature at the festival of flowers' beneath the blue of the sky, the white of the clouds. Nilā had never seen such a pretty autumn before, had never seems' (291). Even at her great sorrow Nilā does not like bitter feelings when Danellie suggests her to go back India, "Do I have a land of my own if your own land spells your shelter security, peace and Joy India is not my own land' (291), Benoir, as the barrier of Nilā's way has totally removed, Now everywhere freedom for her. And her road to self-discovery has only just begun.

Nasrin here idealizes her heroine as Ebsen's Nora in "A Doll's House; who is bold in concept and powerful in execution. Like Nora, Nila too has been represented as an exceptional lady, who instead of following social systems revolts against the society. She seems to be ready to bear any risks by revolting social values even in hostile world. She does not even feel any regret when she is in great difficulties. She rather, feels of learning the great lesson. Then she says, 'time is never wasted. This time was spent in acquiring wisdom and I reduced it or I would have spent my life under a misconception' (291). Though the French society is not suitable place for Nila, her attachment is seen so tight with it.

Nasrin, on the other hand sheds her critical eyes on the vivid sides of French society. She makes her character to wonder in each and every corners of the French society. Whenever Nila moves, she witness, the surprisingly, beautiful sight of France. Her Intellectual head reads the various social factors. When she sees different style in any field she remembers the bad conditions of Indian society as soon as possible. After observing the well facilitates society, Nila tries to draw the parallel between the French society and finally it becomes imbalance. French society is politically conscious, therefore it believes in classless society. ' No one has to die from starvation. It's such a lovely city everyone has food to eat a roof over their head, and clothes to wear and security' (129).

No field is left underdeveloped in this country remarkable progress in science and technology can be found here. Everything is done by machines there is no manual labor even in farming. When Nila sees the countryside of France, it becomes difficult to believe that it is village there in no similarity between the Indian village and French village. In fact, Nila thinks that village suggests the remote place where the in fractures of development, has not been reached yet. But the countryside of France is

far more better than that of the Indian village. Once on her journey to countryside, Nila sees the beautifully ordered villages the farmlands homestead and the healthy looking cows were the magic source of attraction, for Nila, "Farmer sped by in fast cars beer cans in hands joyous celebrating. No one gazed cattle; machines sowed seeds harvest the crop and gathers them. Whenever Nila left Calcutta, she saw emaciated cows harnessed by emaciated farmers who sources seeds by hand and reaped the harvest by hand. After working hard, around the year they seldom got two square of meals a day. And here the government gives farmers lots of money not to farm or raise cattle, sheep or pigs. They have so much that the market overflowed. In this country, it is cheaper to buy produce from other countries than to produce it themselves. A farmer can tweak his moustache and say that on his land, if he farmed he would earn so much money and the government would say I'll give twice that if you don't farm" (263). Unlike the French agriculturak system, Indian farming system is totally based on the manual labour. It is unscientific and full of labour exploitations. There is feudalism, someone struggles while others have fun the whole thing is joke" (263). But in French society there is no existence of master-slave relationship because the manual labour does not work, everything is done by machine." True there are no maids. But there is no need either. The place is full of machines and the only work is in switching then. on" (53).

Nila's journey in French society teaches her lots of new things. Sometime she is led to perceive the unbelievable truth. When she is introduced with the ghetto of France, she shows her disagreement with the definition of poverty. 'Nila looked at the brightly painted houses and wondered how they defined poverty. She saw the cars standing in front of the houses and asked who do these belong to? They belong to poor because they could not afford new models of expensive cars Nila's eyes had seen the

slums of Calcutta and for those eyes no other kind of poverty ever match up. She had seen millions of refugees, homeless hungry, half and suffering with no treatment in sight. But that man who just came out of that house after a full meal who got into his car; and shook his head in time to the music as he drove off he is no poor' (122).

As Nila notices the European socio-cultural way, she pictureizes the evil practice of Indian society. In the comparison of these society Europe is found on the top of the ladder of development where as the India is still slugging in its last step. Here Nila is seemed quite worried about the negative sides of Indian society. India has gone so back due to its own evil practices. It is still is sticking around those worst customs. One of the most remarkable custom that has pushed the Indian society towards the barbaric stage is dowry system. India has witnessed the many innocent daughters' sacrifice in the name of dowry. Nila mentions that the 'girls who is dark and from poor economic background are supposed to be unfortunate because*no one marries woman who are. . . dark no one wants girl children; they need a dowry and may be your parents were poor and already had a few girls' (192).

Nasrin's critical eyes are not fixed on the-only one side of Indian society, those eyes rather peep on the whole inside it. All social values are baseless and unscientifically followed. Behind Nasrin's revolution against the Indian society, her main target can be against for Hindu religion, according to her, is having no reason and logic. Taslima expresses her rage and disagreement with the Hindu religious practices through her character Nila in this book. Nila can't be convinced with the religious practice of Indian society. The religion itself is not far from bias. Nasrin brings the reference of Nila's mother's last rites. Only the son is assigned to perform the ceremony. But the daughter's are not supposed to be responsible to carry the sorrows of her mother's death. Nasrin, therefore narrates: 'Nikhil's (Nila's

brother) duty extends for a whole month. He has to wrap a piece of unstitched cloth around his waist another on his body and carries a cloth to seat on. He would eat only boiled vegetables and rice and yogurt with for a month Nikhil would carry his sorrow. Thus, for Nila, the sorrow is not for a month but for three days. She is married and has gone into another family. Now she does not have so many duties towards her mother. Anirban also maintains the rule's faithfully' (150).

Nasrin here mocks at the partiality of Hindu religion that does not give any importance to the daughter, She further states that Hindu religion demands more duties from female than that of male. For its justification, Nasrin deals with the problem of Molina who has suffered for years being a dedicated wife to her husband her husband is seen indifferent towards his wife even during the worst time of her life. Here Nasrin's point is that Anirban should not grieve over his wife's death. And the sorrow for him is not more than three days. He never sees the point in looking back and wallowing in misery. Anirban's duties finish along with Molina's death. In this way, Molina's dedication truly pictures the religious and traditional dogmas.

Nila shows her disinterest when everyone stops her from going France before her mothers' "Shradha" she sees "no point in feeding people and calling the priest". (153) When some one says 'your mother's spirit will suffers' don't behave like this' Nila laughs 'Ma' is used to be suffering and her spirit will also be able to take it this is nothing' (155) Nila cannot assimilate this and rejects the belief of ghost and spirit and the routine of magic and ritual around this belief, .Nila often scorns for the superstition of Indian culture. She crosses her curious question about it, When Nikhil scatters some cooked rice in courtyard, calls to the crows to come and feed Nila laughs at it and questions to him "Do you really believe that 'Ma' has become a crow?" (159). The all ritual ceremony for Nila is nothing than illusion there is no

scientific reason behind it Nila then shows her disagreement to this culture. When she asks to her brother 'Dada' tell me the truth do you really believe in all these rituals and rules of Hinduism? I see no funs in a bunch of illogical rules and pointless emotion' (159). In this way, Nila goes on deconstructing all things that the, Hindus hold true. The striking issue of rebirth in the eastern philosophy is directly can rejected by Nila. Her disbelief in rebirth can be, noticed when she asks to her French lover; "You believe in life after death?" (264). Though there is heaven and hell in her religion she cannot assimilate it: And she applies her own scientific interpretation about the very topics of heaven and hell and says 'where is heaven and where is hell, who says they are far away? In the mist of men resides heaven and hell both' (265) with the regard of religion Nila adds some philosophical references to support her rebellious opinion; " Did you read about Indian Charback school of philosophy in your books? In those days the most popular philosophy was the Lokyat. These Lokyits did not believe in the soul or in god or heaven and hell. For many years India was ruled by the British. They wanted to make us that we were very mediocre peoples not equal to them in knowledge sophistication or any thing and we were fit to be slaves and nothing else. Of course this was not true. It was said just fool the people on India, So when the freedom movement started, some fundamentalist pundits wanted to glorify the Indian past. They dug up the Indian history to prove how great we were. To oppose the rationalism and materialism of the west they began to claim the ancient sages had said life was temporal, illusion and Maya. This was entirely to revoke a self-esteem that we had lost and the westerners took this to be the true image of India" (265).

When Nila says 'my religion is private' (179) we come to know that she is sever critique of Eastern philosophy. She shows her direct disagreement with Brahmism which naturally has become the influence and ingredient in Hindus moral life. She has been shown so unconvinced with the Hindu religion that she even becomes to ready for eating

beef in France. To facilitate her statement, she defines the Hindu religion using her own rational hypothesis. "It's not forbidden to eat beef in Hindu religion. In the Vedic age, we all ate beef. Then the Brahmins introduced certain restrictions to differentiate themselves and they gave up beef. Slowly the caste below them also followed suit. That's how it became the status symbol not to eat beef and became a custom." (179). This is how, Nasrin digs the hidden mystery of Hindu religion and states her religious decent.

Similarly, Nila receives a good impression of literary aspect of Europe (especially France) from its various writers. Though she appreciates some of the famous Indian writers, she shows her great devotion to western literature. She admires Madhusadan Dutta a great scholar and the first great poet of modern Bengal. But her top priority is seen to those European writers. She shows her resentment with swami Vivekananda reputed scholars of India. 'Nila is a little skeptical about Vivekananda- he was in favour of child marriage for girls and had opposed to widow remarriage' (43). Her wide information about the European writers tells something us that she is more interested in European literatures. She often recites the name of Ezra Pound, Scott Fitzgerald, Ernest Hemingway, George, Samuel Beckett. Time and again Nila narrates about Hemingway; 'He lived like a pauper in a dark room with no hot water. He had no money to buy fire wood and heat the room. The house had no toilet he used a bucket. Hemingway said something really valuable staying in Paris was never in vain what ever you gave to Paris the city paid you back in full, of course, those were the old days and Hemingway and others may have been poor but they were happy' (181).

Along with the various factors of French society, Nasrin arrives to admire of European knowledge. In this reference, Nasrin links the European's beliefs in power of knowledge. They believe in the investigation, extension and expression of knowledge. They are indulged in finding out new information in different fields. With this regard, Nasrin shows the example naturally treatment method of any illness.

Nowadays, herbal method has gained its popularity replacing the old practice of allopathic method. At the same time, she mentions the bitter reality of non-westerners habit. Indian people are compelled to imitate the same habit that is left by western. Thus, the out dated knowledge of European-comes to be an absolute truth for those Indian people. Nasrin, here laughs at the ignorance of Indian people and narrates in her book. 'After three days fever. Benoir took her to the doctor. He prescribed medicines for her and when Nila came home with the medicine, she saw the bottle was etched with trees and plants. Trees and plants. Benoir explained that these were herbal medicines. These days no one except fools had any chemicals people usually went for herbal treatment. Nila's head started throbbing not with the fever but with this revelation. 'In Calcutta, she had seen the illiterate uneducated people have these medicines those who went to quacks got cheated and died painfully. Nila the champion of logic and research in the western world was analyzed to see that here people were looking elsewhere for succor; the eyes of the educated upper classes were turned towards the dark irrational. She threw away those bottles when Benoir wasn't looking. Nila's fever subsided on its own in seven days.' (254)

Taslina nasrin in this way mentions two different cultures in her work, French Lover , and shows the situation of women in those cultures. Nasrin on the one hand seems to be fascinated by the western culture, where freedom and individualism are not the problem. People can enjoy their life as they wish. There she finds that people can achieve their dream fulfilled. Unlike India, there is class and gender discrimination, therefore, her character Nila shows her great attraction to this perfect land.

IV. Conclusion

The French Lover gives an account of the two cultures, the western and non-western in general and French and Indian culture in particular. The Indian socio-cultural construction is shaped very narrowly where only the canonical person and those males have right to live the real life. And rest of the others are living as sub-human beings: they are deprived of the basic unalienable rights of life liberty and pursuit of happiness. Furthermore the position of women in such a culture is depicted as so deplorable that they have to live losing their real identity. They are suppressed in terms of their desire and expectation. The forcefully imposed social duties have become the heaviest burden for an educated girl of this modern society like Nila, the heroine of this novella. Nila, therefore revolts against such biased society by leaving her husband and the whole Indian culture as well. Nila's rage, hatred emerges when she faces the French culture closely.

The French society as Nila gets is better in its democratic practices. No racial gender and class discrimination can be found in this culture. The European culture in fact, is the suitable example of place, where self-freedom and individualism are not the problem for other, people can live their life as they wish. People can achieve their fulfilled dream. It is the city of freedom and land of equality everyone is the same. Some has better jobs and some does not but everyone has their human dignity. The overall aspects of this society are equally remarkable. When she sees the miracle of science and technology in French society her fascination with this land further increases and she tries to forget her Indian identity and wants to get transformed into this society. She feels to be dumb founded when she approaches the systematically maintained society. There is no political and social problem at all. Nila then realizes herself that's how it should be. But the Indian society is totally opposite of the

European society. It is quite backward from the perspective social development. It is so, Nila thinks, because of the Indian's cultural and religious dogma. Even in the climax of science and technology in Indian society is still struggling with primitive thoughts. Here government is unable to secure the basic needs of people. Nila blames those social evils like racial problem, gender discrimination and class conflict are the responsible factors to push back the Indian society from the threshold of development. That's why Nila shows her dissatisfaction with her native soil.

Nila, breaking the wall of socio-cultural construction, arrives to imitate the western cultural habits. In terms of imitating new cultural habits, she has to face countless difficulties. Like her Indian husband, She is destroyed by her French lover whom she devoted herself with her money faith and almost everything. Her dreams are betrayed in these societies too but Nila never is shown disenchanted with the foreign culture. When she is deserted by her French lover she does not make any plans of going back to India. She rather assumes her road to self discovery has only just begun. And she wants to walk on the path of this French society, but not in her land.

To conclude, Nasrin's *French lover* is a type of comparison between two cultures, western and non-western. The western culture is mentioned as the most enchanting place, where the real human life can be enjoyed. The sub-continental culture, on the other hand, is barbaric disordered biased. Therefore, Nila revolts against such societies and leaves everyone to achieve the human dignity. Her willingness to see faults everywhere is appealing but her refusal to see anything positive in sub continental culture is because of patriarchy prevailing in Indian society.

Works Cited

- Abrahams, M.H.A *Glossary of Literary Terms*. 6th ed. New Delhi: Prism Books Pvt. Ltd. 1993.
- Barker, Chris. *Cultural Studies : Theory and Practice*. London: Sage, 2003.
- Bhabha, Homi K. " Postcolonial Criticism." *Redrawing the boundaries: The Transform action of English and American Literary Studies*. Ed. Stephen Greenblatt and Giles Gunn New York: MLA 1912.
- Chacko Susan. *From the Hoogly to the Seine*. Ed. Sudhir Kumar. Delhi: Vedams Book, 2004. 144-47.
- Datta, Sudipta. *A Search for Lilites*. Rev. of Taslima Nasarin's *French Lover*. The Hindu. 4 Aug. 2002.11.
- Guha, Sreejatta. *trans. French Lover* by Taslima Nasrin. Delhi. Penguin Books. 2002.
- Metnessi Fatima. *Islam and women, Tortures on Women*. Bangladesh: New Circle. 1991.
- Nasrin, Taslima. *French Lover*. Delhi: Penguin books, 2002.
- Selden, Raman. *A Reader's Guide to Contemporary Literary Theory*. 2nd ed. New York: Harvester, 1995. 134-45.
- Stephen, Greenblatt. "Culture" *Critical Terms of Literary Study*. Eds. Frank Lentricchia and Thomas Mcloughlin. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1995. 225-32
- Watson, C.W. *Concept in the Social Science: Multiculturalism*. Delhi: Viva Books Private Limited,2002.