

## Chapter-I

### Introduction

#### **Taslima Nasrin: Her Life and Works**

Taslima Nasrin was born in August 1962 in Muslim family in Mymensingh, East Pakistan the area became independent in 1971; her city of birth is now in the country called Bangladesh. Growing up in a highly restrictive and conservative environment, Taslima was fond of literature while she also excelled in science. After high School in 1976 (SSC) and higher secondary studies in college (HSC) in 1978, she studied medicine at the Mymensingh Medical college, an affiliated medical college of the University of Dhaka and graduated in 1984 with an MBBS degree at the age of 22 . After graduation she worked in gynecology and anesthesiology field until she was forced to quit her job by the government in 1993.

Taslima started writing when she was fifteen years old, beginning with poetry in literary magazines. Her first book of poetry was published in 1986. Next, she started writing about women's oppression. With no hesitation she criticized religion, traditions and the oppressive culture and customs that discriminate against women. Because of her attack on Islam in 1993 a fundamentalist organization issued a fatwa against her and a price was set on her head. After spending two months in hiding, at the end of 1994 she escaped to Sweden. Nasrin spent the next ten years in exile in the west . She returned to the east and relocated to Kolkata, India, in 2004, where she lived until 2007. After renewed unrest broke out, and after spending several months in hiding, Nasrin left for the west again on 19 March, 2008. Currently she lives in New Delhi and supports for secular humanism.

*Lajja (The Shame)*, published in 1993, was her first most controversial book which was banned shortly after its publication. *The Shame*, in which she has

described the atrocities against Hindu minorities by Muslim fundamentalists. *Amar Meyebela (My Bengali Girlhood)* - a memoir of growing up female in a Muslim world published in 1999. In *Ka (A Cry Against)* a book published in 2005, she has shown how a freedom - seeking- woman, even educated like her, would struggle in every step of her life.

Taslima Nasrin's second novel *French Lover* first published in Bengali in 2001 and translated in English by Sreejata Guha in 2002 remarks in the foreword about the book and reflects feministic view which is pivotal theme of the novel.

As a prolific author, Nasrin's other notable works include *Hunger in the Roots* (1986), *Banished Without and Within* (1989), *Shodh* (1992), *Sad Girls* (1994), *Wild Wind* (2002), *Speak up* (2003), *Those Dark Days* (2004), *I am not Okey, but you stay well my beloved homeland* (2006), *Minu* (2007), *Women have no country* (2007), *Shorom* (2009), and *Nothing is there* (2010).

### ***French Lover as a Novel***

*French Lover* is the story of Nilanjana, a young Bengali woman from Kolkata who moves to Paris after her marriage to Kishanlal, a restaurant owner. In Kishanlal's luxurious apartment her existence stands nothing more than a housekeeper and a sex object. Nilanjana looks desperately for a way out of the boredom and depression that threaten to engulf her life. Then, she starts to learn French language and she gets success to find box-packing job. Her taking a job without her husband's consent had already started to hyper the temperature, but when she cooked fish and meat in this veggie's home for her two white girlfriends, the mercury level bursts out of the thermometer. And the rebel in her, in due course, detects that she is not the woman to confine herself to the life of vacuum cleaning, cooking, sitting at his feet and took off

his socks, and serving herself to Kishan as the last dish of the day to be eaten voraciously.

Nila leaves her husband's house and starts to live with her co-worker Danielle, who later on that night turns out to be a lesbian to ignorant Nila and whose rapacious tongue licked her for the rest of the night. While living this never anticipated, yearned and not her cup of tea kind of life, she gets the news of her dying mother for which she goes back to Calcutta. As Nila was not having fine-tuning with both her husband and foreign land, she decides to stay back in Calcutta. But like the way most of the girls are not morally accepted in natal home without marriage or after marriage she was also not received in her own parental home.

On Nila's way back to Paris, she meets Benoir Dupont, a blond, blue-eyed, pink-lipped, six feet three inches tall French man and is swept off her feet. He introduces her to the streets, the cafes and the art galleries of Paris. Actually he makes her dream come true. But this passionate sexually liberating relationship between them comes to the finish line as Nila realizes that Benoir, who claims to love her wholeheartedly, but he actually loves only himself. Nila an intellectual woman, who has a degree in Bengali literature, leaves her selfish French lover after ruining his family. Her whole episodes with her father, her brother, her ex-lover, her nominal brother, her husband and her present lover, she has become in a conclusion that not even one man is good, and her experience with all the lands, whether that is her natal land or the foreign one, Nila, a champion of logic and fine sensibilities, is forced to say that women have not their own lands.

### **Review of literature**

After the Second World War especially after the downfall of USSR, the whole world is divided into the three groups. The first world refers to the capitalist countries,

the second world refers to the socialist countries and the third world refers to the non alien and other once colonized countries. Thus the term 'Post-colonial' and 'Third world' interchangeably used. In this sense the post colonial feminism and the third world feminism are used as overlapping term. By challenging the monolithic notion of western feminism postcolonial feminism focused on the issues of races, class, gender sexuality in different communities of women along with mutuality and complication which suggests attentiveness to the interweaving of the histories of those communities. It focuses on the individual and collective experiences of 'oppression' and 'exploitation' along with 'struggle' and 'resistance'.

Postcolonial feminism has also interrogated issues of assimilation in instances of migration and postcolonial sociocultural displacements in which women have had to negotiate the precarious balance between the tenacious forces of integration and the desire to maintain a sense of their cultural identity as a strategy of self-preservation in their country of adoption. Taslima Nasrin, the most talked about postcolonial feminist, presents protagonist Nila who wrestles to deny own self as the passive receiver but to be confirmed as an active agent in *French Lover*. Nila's de-colonizing and de-patriarchalizing efforts can be vividly seen till the end of the show in a full swing . The review done on the *French Lover* by Dyson Katakshi Kushari in *Some reflections on the art of Taslima Nasrin*, highlights challenging action of non-western third world woman.

Sweet revenge is one of Taslima's favorite fictional themes. She laces this theme of revenge against men with the spice of sex, and the formula sells. In *French Lover* Taslima tried to do what was extremely difficult for her to do: she portrayed her heroine as Hindu girl from contemporary Calcutta, and gave her wild sexual adventures in Paris. (1)

Nyal Daud, the columnist in *The USA Today* focuses of the ideology of the non-westerners towards their female counterpart is itself not justifiable. Rather it is the construct of the subordinated mind of male dominated society. Nila sees everywhere the faults.

*French Lover* is an unsteady exploration into a new culture. Her willingness to see fault everywhere is appealing but her refusal see anything positive is sub-continental culture leaves an imbalance in the book. All writers described flawed humanity, but Nasrin and her characters see more flaws than humanity. (21)

Taslina Nasrin has become a symbol of free speech. The numerous prestigious awards she has received in western countries have resulted in increased international attention to her struggle for women's rights and freedom of expression. Her dreams of secularization are society and secular instead of religions education are becoming more accepted and honored by those who value freedom. In *Writing the Self: Taslima Nasrin's autobiography and the Silent Voices of Bengali feminism*, Urbashi Barat points that,

Throughout her autobiography Nasrin shows women resisting their marginalization and victimization in all the ways of which they were capable. Frequently, of course, feminine rebellion was sexual; their bodies were all that women could treat as their own. (217)

Nasrin capitalizes on the western fancy by combining the oriental mystique with the brazen sexuality of a skin 'not quite white'. Golden aura of a Bengali landscape-red sari, gold jewelry, the bindia on the forehead, a Hindu girl from contemporary Kolkota, Nila enjoys in the streets, the cafes, and art galleries of Pari in France.

Apart from the above criticism, remarks and reviews made on *French Lover* by Taslima Nasrin, no one has even touched superficially issue of postcolonial woman's mimicry as resistance in the novel. The present study will attempt to explore the mimicry role of the protagonist for exiled existence and her battle to carry the definition of female body towards the reverse direction from the standards implanted by patriarchal ideology and so-called superiority of western culture in *French Lover*.

This research has been divided into four chapters. The very first part deals with an introductory aspect of the novel and its writer, central issue raised in the thesis, and literature review and my point of departure. Second part investigates the theoretical log frame that is to be effectively applied in the analysis of the novel, *French Lover*. Postcolonial feminism and Mimicry is the analytical tool. It further comprises its evolution, development, and its applications. Third chapter of this thesis presents textual analysis of the novel, *French Lover* based on the second part. And finally, conclusion is the ultimate part of the thesis which concludes the proven postulates and hypothesis along with main points.

## Chapter- II

### Theoretical Modality

#### Postcolonial Feminism: Introduction and Meaning

Postcolonial feminism emerged from the gendered history of colonialism. Postcolonial feminism broadly characterizes and addresses feminist pre-occupations with race and gender that focus on the formerly colonized societies of Africa, Asia and Caribbean. In many different societies, women, like colonized subjects, have been relegated to the position of 'other', 'colonized' by various forms of patriarchal domination. Postcolonial feminism explores women's racialized and sexualized otherness by locating their marginality and oppression within a three -tiered structure of discrimination maintained by colonial and neo-colonial indigenous patriarchies and the academic and cultural hegemony of western feminism. Postcolonial feminism has also interrogated issues of assimilation in instances of migration and postcolonial socio cultural displacements in which women have had to negotiate the precarious balance between the tenacious forces of integration and the desire to maintain a sense of their cultural identity as a strategy of self-preservation in their country of adaptation.

Since the 1980s, stand point feminists have argued that the feminist movement should address global issues and culturally specific issues in order to understand how gender inequality interacts with racism, colonialism, and classicism in a matrix of domination. Postcolonial and third world feminists argue that some cultural and class issues must be understood in the context of other political and social needs which may take precedence for women in developing and third world countries.

Postcolonial feminists argue that racial class, and ethnic oppressions relating to the colonial experience have marginalized women in postcolonial societies. They

challenge the assumption that gender oppression is the primary force of patriarchy. Postcolonial feminists object to portrayal of women of non-western societies as passive and voiceless victims, as opposed to the portrayal of western women as modern, educated and empowered. In her ground breaking essay *Under western Eyes*, Chandra Mohanty warns against the dangers of limited representations that tend to freeze women in time, space and history. She deconstructs the notion of universalized sisterhood by documenting the double alterity experienced by women of color in different societies who have had to confront a dual system of discrimination, articulated by a white male and female patriarchy.

Postcolonial feminism is critical of western form of feminism, notably radical feminism and liberal feminism and their universalization of female experience. Postcolonial feminists can be described as feminists who have reacted against both universalizing tendencies in western feminist thought and a lack of attention to gender issues in mainstream postcolonial thought.

However, in *Contemporary Postcolonial Theory* Padmini Mongia states that postcolonial discourse examines racialised otherness, postcolonial feminism explores women's racialised and sexualised otherness. The postcolonial feminists have problemalised and politicised the dynamics of inner female space by making it a viable ground of resistance and protest, valorising the idea of women's invisible power of self-affirmation and their capacity to engage in an underground resistance. They question the western feminist assumptions that power is located within manifest levels of activism.

Thus, postcolonial feminism cannot be regarded simply as a postcolonial studies, or, alternatively, as another variety of feminism. Rather it is an intervention that is changing the configurations of both postcolonial and feminist studies.

Postcolonial feminism is an exploration and intersections of colonialism and neo-colonialism with gender, nation, class, race, and sexualities in the different contexts of women's lives, their subjectivities, work, sexuality, and rights.

### **Female Body in Exile in Postcolonial Society**

Female body is in state of exile including self-exile and self-censorship, outsider ness, and un-belonging to itself within indigenous patriarchy in post-colonial society. Ketu Katrak, in *Politics of Female Body*, declares,

. . . literal and metaphoric connotations of exile, as well as the concept of internal exile of the female body from patriarchy, and external exile as manifest in migration and geographical relocation necessitated by political persecution, material conditions of poverty, and forms of intellectual silencing in third world societies. Female protagonists undergo what I term "internalized exile" where the body feels disconnected from itself, as though it does not belong to it and has no agency. (378)

While talking about metaphoric expression, 'female body' has to do with female desire, female identity, female dignity, land and property to claim as her own, her choices, expectations, marriage, priorities, career, education and what not. And literally, it means their dress codes, accessories, postures, and their right to choose motherhood, right upon her womb, sexual partners, and sexual freedom. They are not allowed to have a sovereign connection with their body, and not supposed to decide about the stuffs related to their own body.

Female body is not only the site of oppression but the weapon for resistance as well. They always tend to seek to have an autonomous connection with their bodies and communities, for which they have to resist against the domination and their forcibly made exiled existence. "In resisting exile they often use their female bodies

via speech, silence, starvation, or illness. At times, resistances fail and fatal outcomes result in murder or suicide" (378). They use female bodies the price to relocate their mind and self. It is a mistake to claim that giving education, alone, is well enough to make women's right equal to any of the human right. If it would be so, then there would not be the documented cases in India of educated women's inability to step out of dangerous marriages where dowry demands lead to women's murders. In the South Asian contexts, there is a grave dearth of options for a woman who leaves her husband's home. Apart from some objective factors, there are the psychological and subconscious holds of woman being conditioned thought mythological stories and cultural norms that define a woman as not only belonging to her husband but as not having an autonomous self that can make a life outside of a marital sphere. And if she dared to step outside the boundaries established by the cultural code of pativrata, can be severe as in the woman's ostracization in overt and subtle ways. Socialization patterns combine to have a hold on women even after education, migration, relocation out of the original family and coded structures of morality and behavior.

It might sound vulgar enough to say and shame to accept, but is one of the worst truths that even for many of the girl's guardians, it is more, 'morally acceptable' that their daughters get tortured mentally, emotionally and even physically to the extent of death in the conjugal house than their living separately or in parental home. Morally acceptable should not be mistaken with heartily acceptable. But it would not be morally acceptable too, then there wouldn't be extreme cases of the domestic violence against women each day. Often her parents, her only refuge, encourage a married daughter to put up with physical and emotional abuse, until sadly, she might pay the ultimate price of herself.

Tradition, one of such weapons, forwarded by the patriarchal norms and values, is often used to define the resistance of women towards any injustice against them as a sinful act and to make women themselves believe that it is happening the way it has to be. Tradition is nothing but the way of creating the hegemonic domination over women and to justify it arrogantly. Traditions such as "dowry, polygamy, that in fact control the uses of the female body are mystified as social custom with the weight of ancient, at times, scriptural authority" (390). We have also got the present of killing or persecuting women in the name of witch and the past of "sati (widow immolation)" (381). This system of physically burning alive is, of course, no more alive, but that single woman is burnt alive emotionally and psychologically every moment, her entire life. She is not allowed to remarry and has to live her entire life in white mourning dress or if more, then other kind of dull-colored clothing. We still have the sati system in practice, though in different manner, but with the same degree of ordeal.

While talking about 'exile', it requires to talk about its both levels, i.e. internal and external. This is relatively an evident debate that how woman's existence turns from a subject to an object after becoming 'a good wife', 'a better half' of her husband. She becomes his mere earthy portion and an object through which he displays his power before the world. But it would not be fair to stop right here while talking about her exiled existence and to plant all the blame on the shoulder of wedded house alone. Whether that is her parental home or conjugal, whether that is her parental nation or the foreign territory, she belongs nowhere. Both before and after her marriage, she gets the feeling of being an alien in her own parental home. Before marriage, this 'being an alien' has the sense of 'being a burden,' whereas after marriage it appears as

'being only a guest'. And revolting to get her genuine existence means being ready to get questioned about her so-called morality and to get ostracized from both places.

In this postcolonial scenario, when the world is highly ruled by the concept and practice of globalization, women, who are migrated abroad after marriage, face double alienation. On the one hand, she has to be a traditionally 'good wife' and 'good daughter-in-law' to satisfy in laws' needs and expectations. And in contrast, she has to adopt westernization to fit in the outside world. Both places are the ones she is not used to adjusting with and that is not all, but also she has to impress these both to create some space for her living. But this place could only be a 'fake space'. The place, where one has to act, one has to be somebody else, can never be a real space. Both of them are her "alien homes" (388). Everything she does that contrast with the western values will be viewed as barbaric ones. She is confused between the meaning of the modernization and westernization. She is tucked between the expectations of her conjugal home and the western values. Eventually she will start transforming herself to suit the colors of these alien homes, by hugging the label of 'inferior' once again.

It is often supposed that woman's aptitude of adjusting and converting according to any new atmosphere is higher than man, and she is trained to take this flexibility as a matter of pride. She is expected to have fine-tuning with any environment because she has no exact place to claim as her own; has to adopt with any identity because her only identity is expected to be her fluid personality with no autonomous self, no agency; has to wear any type of dress she is given and any kind of food has to be palatable to her mouth; her tongue has to adjust with producing any degree of formality; and has to be used to with obeying, suppressing her instincts, and forgetting her self. Her 'self' or 'ego' should not revolt and has to adjust, because that

is the only option, she is recommended, left for her to keep living. That is why, thought usually unexpressed explicitly, female body has been in exile at all times, far and wide.

### **The Concept of Mimicry**

Mimicry is a notion that has played an important role in both feminist and postcolonial theory in recent years. The term was initially used in Biology to refer to the close external resemblance which one living creature bears to another, or to some inanimate object. Now it transcends its area to include other areas of knowledge and expertise. Clearly, the central usefulness of the forced and half-hearted adoption of the style or the conventions of the dominant authority-whether national, cultural or gender-political. The concept also carries with it some of the associations of 'poking fun'- a sort of body- language equivalent of parody.

Mimicry has become one of the major terms in postcolonial studies. Comparatively non-western subject relates it to the imitation of so-called high and western culture. The people who follow the culture of the other are caught up in a state of double articulation of their identity. Mimicry is, then, the sign of double articulation, a complex strategy of reform, regulation and discipline, which appropriates the other as it visualizes power.

Mimicry is also the sign of the inappropriate, however, a difference or recalcitrance, which coheres the dominant strategic function of colonial power, intensifies surveillance, and poses an immanent threat to both normalized knowledge and disciplinary powers. (78)

It can be related to a number of facts imminent in the western as well as other discourses. It is from this area between mimicry and mockery, where the displacing gaze of it is disciplinary double threatens the reforming, civilizing mission, mimicry is

at once resemblance and menace. The menace of mimicry, as Bhabha says, is its double vision which in disclosing the ambivalence of colonial discourse also disrupts its authority. In addition, it is a double vision that is a result of what he described as the partial representation of the colonial object.

In his *Mimicry and Man: the Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse*, Homi k. Bhabha starts his discussion of mimicry with a quotation from Jacques Lacan " the effect of mimicry is camouflage" (86). He further moves on to suggest that this is only the beginning. Mimicry is not just a weapon of the oppressed but also of the oppressor the mimic man is the contradictory figure who simultaneously reinforces colonial authority and disturbs it. Bhabha's discussion of mimicry is interesting especially for the students of literature.

Mimicry is often discussed and analyzed in relation to such theoretical terms as "Masquerade" and Bakhtinian "Assimilation". The following discussion of Masquerade discloses the relation and difference it has with Mimicry. The concept of Masquerade recently used in Feminist and Postcolonial theories consists of a theorizing about the behavior of successful intellectual women who adopted a masquerade of exaggerated feminine flirtatiousness when interacting with men. Women thus successful in traditionally male role used womanliness as a mask or masquerade to hide the possession of masculinity and to deflect the negative reactions that would stem from it. Thus the term mimicry has a relation to this gender and female related adoption of the other culture and roles. Yet it is significantly different from that also as it is related to the colonial sense of the adoption of the higher culture. The next term, assimilation in Bakhtin's "Theory of Dialogue" is a process where by an individual temporarily adopts the view point of ideology of another person, or assimilates these to his or her own consciousness. Such assimilation will

be more or less whole-hearted, to the extent that the individual's viewpoint or the ideology is or is not odds with those of the interlocutor.

Mimicry, thus understood, is related to the adoption of the cultures of the other people, often of the so-called high cultures. Nevertheless, it is not necessary that they, who do it, should reject their own culture. In this sense there emerge as Bhabha says, the double articulation of the identity. Sometimes these dual articulations are intermingled in such a way that there appears a scene of mongrelism. In this sense, it is a related term to Hybridity and crisis of cultural Identity (Ashcroft,3).

### **Mimicry as a Double Articulation**

Homi K. Bhabha is best remembered for his theory of mimicry. He considers that "discourse of post- Enlightenment English colonialism often speaks in a tongue that is forked," which is not necessarily false (76). If colonialism takes power in the name of history, it repeatedly exercises its authority. For the heroic ideal of the enlightening mission, as Lord Rosebery has discussed, produces a text rich in the traditions of irony, mimicry, and repetition. In this comic fun from the high ideal of the colonial imagination to its low mimetic literary effects, mimicry emerges as one of the most " elusive and effective " strategies of colonial power and knowledge. The writers like Naipaul and Rushdie take an ambivalent position to describe and write about the places they represent in the fictional discourse. Emphasizing this point, Bhabha further says :

Which is to say, that the discourse of mimicry is constructed around ambivalence; in order to be effective, mimicry must continually produce its slippage, its excess, its difference. The authority of that mode of colonial discourse that I have called mimicry is therefore stricken by an indeterminacy: mimicry emerges as the representation of a difference that is itself a process of

disavowal. Mimicry is, thus, the sign of a double articulation; a complex strategy of reform, regulation, and discipline, which "appropriates" the other as it visualized power. (78)

As Bhabha asserts in the aforementioned quotation, the effect of mimicry on the authority of colonial discourse is profound and disturbing. He further goes to the point that there is an effect of mockery. Regarding these two concepts, he further writes:

It is from this area between mimicry and mockery, where the reforming, civilizing mission is threatened by the displacing gaze of its disciplinary double that may instances of colonial imitation come. What they all share is a discursive process by which the excess or slippage produced by the ambivalence of mimicry (almost the same, but not quite) does not merely "rupture" the discourse, but becomes transformed into a uncertainty which fixes the colonial subject as a "partial" presence. (78)

By "Partial", he means both "incomplete" and "virtual". It is as if the very emergence of the "colonial" is dependent for its representation upon some strategic limitation of prohibition within the authoritative discourse itself. The success of colonial mimicry by the colonized nations rests on a explosion of inappropriate objects that ensure its strategic failure, so that mimicry is at once resemblance and menace.

He goes on to clarify menace of mimicry which he says consists in its double vision. Such a vision discloses the ambivalence of colonial discourse also disrupts it is authority. And it is a double as the partial representation / recognition of the colonial object.

### Chapter-III

#### Textual Analysis

##### **Exiled Female Body in Existence in *French Lover***

Devoid of any concrete foundation beneath one's feet, female body is, in real, constantly in exile and that exiled female body is a weapon for resistance. Female body is in state of exile including self-exile and self-censorship, outsidership, and unbelonging to itself within indigenous patriarchy. Female body is not only the site of oppression but the weapon for resistance as well. They always tend to seek to have an autonomous connection with their bodies and communities, for which they have to resist against the domination and their forcibly made exiled existence. *French Lover* is an exploration of the same fact along with female body's obdurate uprising attitude to relocate it is mind and self. Taslima Nasrin's *French Lover* orbits around the woman who never tries being a feminist, yet left no stones unturned to free the definition of South Asian femininity from the grasp of patriarchy and colonial mindset. And furthermore, for creating the revolting, offbeat women character, which respects individuality regardless of men, like Nila, and challenging the establishmentarian attitudes and inequities in the name of religion and tradition, the writer Nasrin herself is named vulgar and unaesthetic and has to face the attitude of misogyny and life of exile.

The very novel launches on a directly racist note at the Charles de Gaulle airport in Paris as newlywed Nilanjana has to go through the rough and tough time due to the colour of her skin and her passport which are not white enough and not of rich country. Nila's external exile starts from here, but her internal exile begins with her flashback. She was supposed to do the things regardless of her aspiration, her persona, her dignity, her preference, her prospects, her precedence and so on. Her

dress codes, accessories, bodily postures, choices about motherhood, right to use her body to please her own soul, and almost everything has to be retained according to the patriarchal standard of femininity. It is addressed,

Her father, Anirban, insisted on her wearing her wedding sari and jewellery on the flight-perhaps men know best what would appeal to other men. Kishan was her closest friend, he was her husband and should have to spend her life making him happy. (11)

After reaching Paris with the dream of therapeutic exploration of life, she washes away her sindoor on her forehead and the dark circles around her eyes. But that easy- in-skin and light-on-feet moment cannot last long as Kishanalal yells at her, "What's this. You're bride, you cannot dress this way . Wear a sari and jewellery- people will come to see you later this evening" (14). Though he is also a groom, he does not have to wear accordingly for the simple fact that he is a male, a lawmaker. As declared already, she has to idle away her life making him happy. And she has to drape a sari, wear gold bangles, heavy gold earrings, a gold necklace, brush some powders on her face, draw a line of kohl around her eyes, wear a Sindoor in the parting of her hair and apply some dark lipstick. Now, Kishanalal is in high spirits to call her his bride but for Nila, it is a different kind of death.

Kishan impounds her within the closed doors of his apartment because he is husband, slave's master. He has this right not to permit her to take a job, to live the sovereign life. She cannot go out, until and unless Kishan takes her. Kishan gives her the key to utilize it on one condition that the house was on fire. On that case, she was allowed the freedom to run outside and save her life. "But if there was no fire, the question of saving her life did not arise"(27).

For Kishan women are 'natural cook' or at least cooking or other domestic jobs are the naturally assigned jobs. He is swollen with pride to announce that he is not good at this inevitably needy but 'not -worthy-to be -mentioned Job' but when Nila asks if she has to be the expert, he says, " you do . You're a woman how can you be a woman and not know how to cook?" (18-20). She has to be 'naturally a cook', not for herself but for the man she lives with . Her craving for non-veggie Bengali food does not count, for she lives with the veggie non- Bengali husband. Because her individual identity and existence has already halted to subsist, since "she had one identity-that she was Mrs Lal, Mrs Kishanlal "(67).

Woman's soul is, often, not venerated. It has been developed into the habituation that giving her the corporeal things alone pleases her or should be pleasing to her. She is an object and giving her another object is enough to value her existence.

Nila is not supposed to speak up, to argue, to give logic simply because Indian woman of their dream is patient, tolerant, competent and generous to a fault and Kishan has the same opinion: "Indian wives cannot talk like this" (55). If Kishan's essence has to be pleased, she has to transform herself into a dumb girl who would silently do the housework and never protest at anything, who does not have a soul to call her own and cannot read or write, who did not have her wits about her and did not dream a single dream. She should not live or act like 27 years old mature adult who can go out alone, have tea in a cafe or visit a museum or a bookstore and explore Paris all on her own because Kishan says, "To me, of course, you are a small child" (54). Since Nila is his wife, his property, his wealth, her life was in his hands.

But after all this, Nila takes a job to build her own independent existence, she wanders through the streets to explore the world, she starts to resist against his

domination and mastery attitude to relocate her mind and self. And the resistance level attains the extreme of bidding farewell to his house, when he misbehaves by ignoring two of her white girlfriends, just for the simple fact that in his house she was not allowed to cook non-veggie, which she did. He just wanted her to renounce non-veggie food because he does not take it. She could not take his attitude to any further extent. And she has to resist because she has to demonstrate that she exists, and her existence is solely her private property regardless of anybody else who denies her as an individual existence.

This I, who has evolved over so many years, has to give up her habits, her language, her culture, her nature and fit herself into your mould. You know that I have not done anything wrong. The main reason why you are angry with me is that I have not obeyed you. I cannot survive with so many restraints and strictures. (79-80)

Her battle for existence in her conjugal home may have ended here, but struggle for existence in the foreign land has still a long way to go. She may have depatriarchalized herself from Kishnlal, but she still has to de-colonize her South Asian existence from 'superiority complex' of the western culture. Now the West wants from her cost of breathing and living there. And the cost is again the disconnection of her mind, heart from body. The cost is again the forgetfulness of 'self'. And it inaugurates with Nila's very first night at her only asylum, white girl Danielle's room where former has to bear latter's "hungry fingers" and "voracious tongue every night", for she has nowhere else to go in that alien land.

Kishanlal wanted her to change her patterns for him and West land is no poles-apart from him. She is expected to quit drinking water during the meal because west drinks wine. She has to wear dress for dinner when she is easy in jeans because

westerners have decided that jeans are for the daytime, the workplace. Nicole, Rita Cixous, Maria Svenson, actually no one is concerned about Nila over there. No one notices Nila, another human being like everyone else there, exists. This group of feminist friends of Danielle may think that men perceive women nothing more than just an object, but for Nila these White women are no different than the men of their discussion. They talk in French revealing their knowledge of feminism. Then, "Danielle had said that they had decided to speak in English for Maria's and Nila's sake. But if Maria was not there, Nila knew they should have spoken in French because it was not a discussion in which Nila could even participate"(93). 'We and other' attitude is everywhere in the air. Her being a foreigner in Paris and some other Westerner being a foreigner there is completely a different thing. Nila realizes she is from the East, the exact other of the west. When Benoit calls Picasso as ours, she retorts that Picasso is not Paris', but Spain's. Then Benoit declares, "Oh, all the same; the West's nonetheless" (269). Nila cannot put her proposal or discontent on the Western documentary on India, her own country, or say 'no' to what west has to say about her land because poor and non-whites are not expected to question Western representation, no matter how hackneyed, jaded and faded, regressive and off- putting it is . No one would concern that the South Asian does not just have all the poverty but there are many rich people and many middle-class families. Because "T.V. channel would not be interested in the rich people of India! If they want riches, they will show Bill Gates. Besides, it is good for India if they focus on poverty, she will get more aid" (97). Yes ! Non-west is getting alms from West, so they should keep quiet howmuchevever they are dissatisfied with the partial representation being taken as the intact representation. Nila, South Asian non-white woman has to be geared up to hear the heart -rending words from Westerners Danielle and Benoit, howmuchevever

they claim to love her, every time she wants to pacify their strain by offering a dine. "Eating is no big deal to me, it may be to you. There is nothing more valuable to you than rice because half your country starves to death"(229).

Nilanjana attempts to resist such types of misrepresentation by westerners to the Non-Wests with her female body . Benoir often says, "the Indian woman's body is more mysterious; it had a different feel to it"(268). This mysterious non-western expatriate woman starts to explore French culture; "Yes, I would. But until then, I will be an Indian, poor, starving, pauper, an immigrant here to destroy French culture" (234). Nila realizes that she is from the East, the exact opposite of the West. She does not find any value living in this cruel, foreign land. The more she looks this country, the stranger it seemed. In foreign land she smells the roses without its scent: "In this country flowers do not have a scent; they just look good. In India the roses smell terrific" (271). Nila has found her French lover's disguiseness of love for her, Benoir's love is for himself. He is not different from non-western males. She finalizes that all the males are common in deep inside. Nila has been used and dominated by Indian males as well as western male and female.

Just now Nila has decided that her female body has to do with female desire, female identity, female dignity, land and property to claim as her own, her choices, expectations, marriage, priorities, career, and education. She dares to resist against her Franch Lover as: "You would love to watch the fun, the love and tragic grief of a stupid, silly eastern woman. Finally suicide ! No I am not ready for that" (286). Western males as well as females assume that Eastern women are sensible, good, honest, generous, loving, patient and selfless. They attempt to trap in their web of fashionable love. But Indian woman Nila becomes greedy, selfish, horrid to her selfish French Lover. She is aware of his love to her is tragic grief. She thinks that

she has to exist in the foreign land with her own identity . When Benoir proposes her for marriage, "I will marry you Nila. You will be my wife. I will divorce Pascale tomorrow; come, let's get married. Please believe me, I am going to marry you . No one else but you" (287). Nila realizes that marrying to Benoir is not her exiled female body's mission. For her Benoir's marriage proposal has become as fence in search of autonomous life. So Nila rejects his marriage proposal, "I believe you-you will marry me. But I will not marry you"(287). It is Nila's sweet revenge upon her selfish French Lover- who had not support in her require time that when Nila had expected to stand as a guarantor in renting a house in Paris but Benoir did not give intention to help her.

Nilanjana, the protagonist of the novel, who had migrated to France after her marriage, faced double alienation. Now she has to exist with her exiled female body in foreign land. She prepares her mind to create some space for her living with self-identity. She decides to abort the Benoir's child. "No, this child will not be born . . . I will have an abortion " (287). Nila has used her right upon her womb. She has a sovereign connection with her body and supposed to decide about the stuffs related to her own body. She is as miserable creature deceives her selfish and proudy French Lover.

Nila begins her road to self-discovery with her exiled female body. She uses her exiled female body as the weapon for resistance. She tends to seek to have an autonomous connection with her body and resists against the domination and her forcibly made exiled existence. She breaks the Western male superiority. She makes cartoon to her French Lover Benoir after ruining his family. It is disguise form of Non- Western woman to take revenge upon the oppressor. Indian educated and an intellectual woman Nila discovers that Benoir's first priority is himself and not the woman he loves. Then as non- Western mysterious woman, Nila develops her relation

with selfish French Lover with her mystery and successes to destroy his well family. Benoir experiences Nila's protest upon him and scolds her badly, "You have toyed with me all this while, Nila. You have had fun at my expense. You have fooled me. You have sucked me dry, burnt me alive, ruined me, ruined my family" (289). Nila fooled Benoir by ruining him and his conjugal life and family. It is adventurous deed of non-western assumed passive and voiceless woman Nila.

Emotionally, psychologically, physically, economically, culturally, socially, intellectually and sexually, both implicitly and explicitly and both internally and externally, female body is, or forced to be, or at least expected to be in exile. This exiled female body is the weapon to resist upon the oppressor and to relocate the female identity, female dignity and female existence with her mind as she struggles to come to terms with her self-identity in a hostile world.

### **Mimicry and Uncertain Identity in *French Lover***

Mimicry is increasingly important term in post-colonial theory, because it has come to describe the ambivalent relationship between colonizer and colonized. When colonial discourse encourages the colonized subject to 'mimic' the colonizer, by adopting the colonizer's cultural habits, assumptions, institutions and values, the result is never a simple reproduction of those traits. Rather, the result is a 'blurred copy of the colonizer that can be quite threatening'. This is because mimicry is never very far from mockery, since it can appear to parody whatever it mimics. Mimicry therefore locates a crack in the certainty of colonial dominance, an uncertainty in its control of the behavior of the colonized.

Mimicry has been one of the major terms in postcolonial studies. Comparatively non-western subject relates it to the imitation of so-called high and Western culture. The people who follow the culture of the other are caught up in a

state of double articulation in their identity. In the novel, Nila when arrives in Charles de Gaulle airport in France she has to halt and bear the misbehavior of French people because of her language.

Nilanjana, a newly married bride of Kishanal was really stunned of the misbehaviors. But she, herself convinced by the colonizer assumption that civilized people in any country, always spoke fluent English. English is the language of European colonizer. In Calcutta the knowledge of English separated the civilized from the barbarians. Even though English is not her native language, Nila feels pride talking fluent English. Nila's mimicry of talking fluent English helps her to become in civilized category . But her proud of civilized language English becomes on the bottom in front of French people in Paris.

Most of the Indian emigrants have tried to mimic French culture, assumption, customs and anything in France. Once there was party organized in the house of Kishanal, the Indian emigrants were drinking French Whisky.

This is the problem with Indians-they do not know how to drink and yet they have to 'Rajesh said, 'we do not really drink for the sake of drinking. We drink so what we can get drunk, however that may be'.

I agreed with you, my friend : Babu Gogini guffawed (17).

They drink whisky even they lack how to drink. They think drinking whisky is so called high culture and have to drink. They do not really drink for the sake of drinking but adopt drinking culture of French. It is the blurred copy of assumed civilized culture that is quite threatening for the mimic person. The questions have been raised upon their real identity. They could not be assured in their own country and their motherhood. The Indian emigrants were talking about India and underestimate their country.

'India's economy is going in for a massive change in the next ten years'.

'Nonsense ! It is poor country and it will stay poor-the country is corrupt from top to bottom'.

"All of Silicon Valley is in the hands of the Indians and even Europe is trying to lure Software professionals from India'.

'Only a handful of people have money in their hand - the rest are all dying of hunger'.

'Population is killing the country' (19).

India has ancient history of independence and has immense potentiality to thrive amongst the countries in the world. The group clearly breaks into the two. Only few of them are convinced of their country and argue India is emerging as super power in the world within a decade. It is immense potentialities on human resource and economic growth will ultimately hit the history. But most of them argue it is a poor country and it will remain poor and it is corrupted from top to bottom and how can it be so. Only handfuls people are rich and rest are dying of hunger. They have not been convinced by their country's progress and underestimate like European colonizers.

Kishan ran two restaurants in Paris. His business of restaurant was going to bankrupt. He did not probe its hidden reasons but literally thinks it probably by its name which is named after the Indian historical place i.e. Lal Killa and Taj Mahal. He thinks the change of name would help. Actually there is nothing to do with the name rather there might be the food items and quality of cook. His view on this is:

Kishan ran two restaurants. One was called Taj Mahal at Montparnasse and the other was called Lal Killa in the fifteenth arrondissement. The later was not doing too well. Kishan believed a change of name would help.

'Try to think of a new name for it', he told her (25).

Kishan poured himself a glass of Scotch and relaxed on the couch. As he drank he told her that his restaurant, Lal Killa, was going to bankrupt. The name would have to be changed very soon. Nila could not really understand how a change of name would rejuvenate the business. When she asked as much, Kishan laughed and said, 'You will not understand these things. We can see the impact of colony and its system has made the mind of Indians like a colonizer.'

Most of the Indians move to Europe and assimilate themselves as European and begin to learn European life style. First, they are hegemonized and if they come in Europe they will have good opportunity to earn handsome amount. Second, Europe is the land of tapestry. Most people believe going Europe is the gate way of success. But in fact it is not so what they feel like. Mojammel laments before Nila and discloses his plight and his Indian colleague.

He clearly discloses his plight, his way of learning, their hardships and financial and legal tension. Most of the emigrants are well educated in their country and willingly exiled to European in the name of getting more money and better life. It is all the mimicry concept made by Europe colony. Mojammel who had completed his master's degree in chemistry from the Dhaka University, works as dish cleaner in Kishan's restaurant. Nila becomes curious about his work and asks,

'Do the people at home know that you work in a restaurant ? ' Nila sighed and asked.

'I have not told them. . . I am ashamed . . . ' Mojammel laughed and said, 'Do you know what I have told my family? I work as a DC-people think it is Deputy Commissioner. I know it as Dish Cleaner' (34).

Mojammel works as a DC-people think its Deputy Commissioner but he knows it as Dish Cleaner himself. It seems to become superior himself which supports him in high rank person. But in reality his condition is worse than the low-class workers. It is not far from mockery.

Most of the Indians suppose that European writers and literatures are high civilized one and they feel heart touching. They think learning their language and reading their literature is most important which develop superiority themselves. Nila becomes very excited when she finds the original book of European writers in French language. She becomes very curious to know French literature.

Nila, an expatriate Indian emigrant in France starts to explore the city . Kishan, husband of Nila parked the car in Saint Michelle and went into Jibarre. Nila had gone with him. It was a sea of books. Nila drowned in the original French language, she handled the book one by one, smelt them, hugged to her heart as it is her life. Then she decided that she should learn French language which will help her to read and understand its literature. In spite of Bengali literature Nila gave more interest upon French literature. It is her mimicry of French language and literature. It creates the sign of double articulation, a complex strategy of reform, regulation and discipline, which appropriates the other as it visualized power.

Indians have pre-conceived idea that English language is superior or civilized peoples language because two hundred years of British rule has strengthened that belief. And a couple of Bengali emigrants Sunil and Chaitali assume that French language as superior one in France. So they speak French with their daughter 'Tumpa'. They opines that teaching Bengali is no use for their daughter in Paris. They view on as:

Both Sunil and Chaitali were of the same opinion. What was the use of teaching her Bengali-she would not need it. Nila has seen this in Calcutta too :Bengali children were sent to English medium schools and spoke to English at home, as if Bengali was a low -class language. The same logic applied there too: English helped in getting jobs, while knowing Bengali added no value. In spite of this factor, Nila had studied Bengali literature. Anirban had said this degree had no value. (44)

As Indians assume that English language is superior civilized people's language in India, the expatriate Indian emigrants assume French language is superior and high civilized one in France. Bengali children were sent to English medium school and spoke English at home, as if Bengali was a low- class language. The same logic applied there too that English helped in getting jobs, while knowing Bengali added no value. Nila's father Anirban also had the same logic that her degree of Bengali literature had no value. Both Sunil and Chaitali were of the same opinion that teaching Bengali literature to their daughter is no use. It is the imitation of colonizer's concepts and assumptions which create 'double articulation' on the colonized native people. 'Double articulation' is uncertainty of their identity. This identity of the colonized subject -'almost the same but not quite'. It creates double threaten to the mimic person.

Indians as well as Non-Westerners think that study in abroad and getting degree of European country is their real identity. When Nila had come back to Calcutta to see her ill mother Molina, relatives came to visit her.

Molina's aunt called out to Poltu and pushed him in front of Nila. 'You said you wanted to ask your didi about Pasis, so ask !' Poltu was fifteen years old .

He sidled behind his grandmother. 'Just try to take this Poltu abroad, Nila. The boy does not want to study here at all'. (135)

Nila guessed that her relatives thought her to be very rich now. Molina's aunt asked Nila to take her grandson Poltu for abroad study in Paris. It is educational mimicry by Indians. They are convinced that study in India is valueless. Herds of youths from Non-Western countries have migrated to gain European education and get degree from there. It creates hybridity and crisis of cultural identity on them.

When Nila, once encountered with Morounis, Indian born French girl, she desperately asked her in Indian language supposing her she is Indian. But her hope turned into despair with in a moment when she responded in French . Nila initially supposed she might be Tamil or Malayalam. But she replied she is French and has no relation with India but she knows she was born in India. Nila thinks she is also like other mimic Indians who do not prefer to say themselves as Indian rather prefers to be French.

Nila supposes Morounis unlike other Indians but her history is no similar like Indian emigrants. She was born in India but up brought and educated in France. She was adopted by French couple in her infancy stage. So she did not know anything about her birth place. Even she had not been to India after her arrival to Paris. It is very much ridiculous that the minute the Indian emigrants get their citizenship, they forget all about their own country. They become in trap of confusion that they cannot identify their mother land. They assume foreign land is their own land but it is in fact foreign one for them. It creates double articulation in their identity.

Nila had celebrated Benoir's birth day party very nicely. She has arranged very long menu for the birthday party. She has planned to invite her guests along with Indians. She has prepared the Indian table for the guests. She has almost invited the

non-westerners in the birthday party; Where Benoir was displeased with her arrangements. Benoir no longer can stay with such non-whites and slaves. But he does not comment about it before the guests. He was really fuming with despair. He just wanted to celebrate his birthday party with Nila. But in the name of honoring and making Benoir happy Nila had arranged it. During that day Nila and Mojammel talked more about their pangs.

Mojammel told her about Bachhu, the cook. He did not get his papers in France and so he was off to Italy. He had to pay the agent a hefty amount to get his papers For Italy. The agent told him what to do, when to run and when to jump. Just before entering Italy, Bachhu had jumped off the train in the dark-as was the rule. Once the train was gone, he was supposed to run on the tracks and hide in the bushes if another train came along. (275-6)

They are really mimicing the European life style and subordinated before the European. They even ready to die for the sake to living European life . Bachhu, the doctor did not get his paper in France and got his way to Italy by paying huge amount to agent but he has died of the train accident while jumping from the train to make an attempt to escape from the police.

Non-Western and third world emigrants marry French women in exchange for a lot of money. Such a marriage gets them the papers and even a citizenship. In Beanoir's birthday party Mojammel carried a Nigro boy Modibo who had recently arrived from Mali. Modibo was an illegal immigrant to build his future in France. He was living in dark, rejected housing estates, on food donated by the Church and with the fear of the police haunting him every moment. Now he has found a girl to marry." Modibo was desperately seeking a French woman to make her fall in love with him and marry him, so that he could get permission to live here. The good news was that

Modibo had found a French girl" (292). It is in fact mimicry that marriage is the process for legality and get citizenship. They think it is a solution of their problem. But it arises the questions on their real identity . They happens to lose their own identity and becomes in trap of uncertainty. Their new imitated identity is a 'blurred copy' of the French culture that is quite threatening. Their identity seems almost the same but not quite. Modibo marries a French girl to get permission paper to live in France. But it creates uncertainty in his identity furthermore.

### **Nila's Mimicry as Resistance in *French Lover***

So far as the concept of resisting to the oppressor directly has ended, the form of revolution has already taken its new form known as mimicry which is not obvious as direct protest. Mimicry does not mean that opposition is rejected, but rather that it is seem to encompass more than over opposition. The mimicry of the postcolonial subject is therefore always potentially destabilizing to colonial discourse, and locates on area of considerable political and cultural uncertainty in the structure of imperial dominance.

Mimicry is often discussed and analyzed in relation to such theoretical term as "Mesquerade". The concept of Masquerade recently used in Feminist and Postcolonial theories consists of a theorizing about the behaviour of successful intellectual women who adopted a masquerade of exaggerated feminine flirtatiousness when interacting with men. Women thus successful in traditionally male roles used womanliness as a mask or masquerade to hide the possession of masculinity and to deflect the negative reactions that would stem from it. Thus, the term mimicry has a relation to this gender and female related adoption of the other culture and roles. Female mimicry is commonly considered in the context of alternative ability to fool males. Mimicry role

of female becomes the best weapon to challenge upon the superior assumption of male.

In the novel, the protagonist Nilanjana, a young Bengali woman from Calcutta who moves to Paris after her marriage to Kishanlal, a restaurant owner. Kishanlal's luxurious apartment seems to Nilanjana to be a gilded cage, and she feels stifled within its friendless confines. Her marriage, where she functions a little more than a housekeeper and a sex object, is far from fulfilling - and Nilanjana looks desperately for a way out of the boredom and depression that threaten to engulf her life. After all, Nila takes a job to build her own independent existence. She wanders through the streets to explore the world. She becomes very impressive to the free culture of Paris : "I am very impressed by the cafe culture of Paris. People sit around, drink coffee, read the newspaper, write, and literary groups also convene at the cafe's -wonderful, is not it? "(74).

Nila starts to resist against his domination and mastery attitude to relocate her mind and self. Nila attempts to improve French language herself reading a French book and listening a cassette of French pronunciations to find a good job in Paris. "Nila was lying down, reading a book on how to teach herself French. A cassette was playing French pronunciations" (72). Nila's mimicry of French language is for existence with her own identity in France. She is in search for independence and autonomous life in a strange city far away from home. She uses mimicry as round way of resistance to her husband Kishanlal. And the resistance level attains the extreme of bidding farewell to his house, when he misbehaves by ignoring two of her white girlfriends, just for the simple fact that in his house she was not allowed to cook non- veggie. She should not take his attitude to any further extent. And she has to resist because she has to demonstrate that she exists and her existence is solely her

private property regardless of anybody else who denies her as an individual existence. "You know that I have not done anything wrong. The main reason why you are angry with me is that I have not obeyed you. I cannot survive within so many restraints and strictures". (80)

Her battle for existence in her conjugal home may have ended here, but struggle for existence in the foreign land has still a long way to go. She may have de-patriarchalized herself from Kishanlal, but she has to de-colonize her South Asian existence from 'Superior complex' of the Western culture. She starts to mimic French culture for cultural understanding and destabilizing superior complex of the western culture.

Now, in this amazing city of freedom, Nila realized she need never do anything in secret. In this city, she noticed, it was wrong not to drink; people thought you were uncultured and uncivilized... this was shameful, not drinking wine-this will not do at all. Nila decided she should have to get used to drinking wine and save her face. (84)

In Calcutta she had seen people buying liquor surreptitiously, wrapping the bottle in newspaper so that other could not tell. But she feels shameful not drinking wine in Paris.

In order to explore Paris with her mimicry role, Nila found ridiculous heartless behavior of so called civilized people. Post-colonial expatriate woman Nila was supposed that there are not beggars in so called rich city Paris. But when she saw a white beggar sat on the street even at that early hour, holding a placard that said "We Are Hungry", she found it is only the Western propoganda that whites are rich and civilized people. Beside the white beggar there is a big dog twice the man's size. She feels, if Danielle saw this sight she would sorry for the dog and drop ten francs into

the hat in front of the man. Not just Danielle, nearly everyone who gave money to this beggar would do so out of pity for the dog and not for the man. It is a satire for the Westerners who claim they are real humanists themselves. Mimicry does not mean that opposition is rejected, but rather that it is seen to encompass more than opposition. In her exploration into the French culture and life style of French people, the postcolonial intellectual woman Nila finds out that western women are psychologically weak. They run to psychiatrists even in minor cases.

When Nila decided to go to Calcutta to see her ill mother Molina, Danielle, the lesbian girl friend of Nila became very much upset. Then the third world woman Nila assumed that the people of the first world could not have their minds in a less- than- perfect condition. Through her mimicry of western culture in France, Nila points out the weakness of so called civilized people of the first world. Mimicry is not only the partial representation of mimic person but it is real challenge for those partial representators.

Mimicry is not only the double articulation but a way to explore and understand other's cultural value systems. On the way of exploration into French culture, Nila explores western literary person and finds even pitiful condition. Western people think that the people from non-western as well as third world are poor, pauper, and uncivilized. But Nila discloses to Benoir about the real situation of so famous western literary person Earnest Hemingway. And Nila tries to prove that mere postcolonial people are not the victim of poverty. Poverty is everywhere in the world, but only the representation is different. Westerners represent themselves as superior people even in poor.

From the imitation of Western life style, Nila becomes to understand that in reality life style of western people is pitiable. Actually, after leaving Kishan's

apartment, Nila used to live with her French girlfriend, Danielle. But Danielle's lesbian behaviour and superior complex disturbed Nila's mission of self-discovery. Now she has decided to leave her French girlfriend and to rent a house in Paris . But when there was a letter from the bank that the money from India had arrived and now there was two hundred and ninety thousand, seven hundred and eighty francs in Nila's account, Danielle unfolds her economic problem to Nila . It is a round way to beg money. Then Nila feels that it is the dramatic role of Danielle to snatch her money. She leaves her French girlfriend as a protest of poor, pauper, uncivilized third world non-western woman. "Nila left the key on the table, just as she had in Kishan's house. In the same manner she stepped out towards a new life" (208).

In search of autonomous life Benoir happened in Nila's life. Benoir was proud of French art and architects. He attempts to prove that French people are the civilized one among the world. Because of proud French people's eyes had become totally blind. They were unable to find out their root of pride. They were unable to find their root of pride. They think it does not matter where their architects belong to. When Nila said Madam Curie is the pride of Poland not France because she was born in Poland then Benoir interrupted her and said Madam Curie was the pride of France. Madam curie's great discovery has made French pride. But when Nila related this statement to her situation, Benoir did not answer. After that Nila discloses her real vision that she will be an Indian, poor starving, pauper, an immigrant here to destroy French culture. So Nila's mimicry of French culture and life style is not to be French citizen but an existence in foreign land with her female identity and female dignity.

As a postcolonial woman, Nila exercised to decolonize the western assumption towards non-west and third world with her female body and mimicry. She finds no different between non-west and west literary person. Nila became very crazy

to know about the western literature. In her craziness there was an underlying plan to decolonize the western assumption. When Nila's French lover, Benoir represents that western literature is powerful which has become success to win the heart of the people of the world. Benoir as from the west does not show no interest in Madhusudan. Then Nila has tried to show non- west literature and literary person is as equal as west. It proves that non- west are not barbaric. If they get chance, they will become intellectuals. Mimicry is an imbedded form of understanding colonizer's culture and awareness of domination roots. Nila fools her French lover. "Benoir's voice was faint, 'Nila, you are fooling me'" (242). She demotions Benoir pride further more.

Benoir was proud of that French are civilized one but when Nila disclosed the history of civilization, he shrugged. His pride becomes as ridiculous. West think Christian civilization has the logest history but Nila points out that 'Mohenjodaro and Harappa' had flourished before the birth of Christ. It is real challenge to the western superior complex.

Postcolonial intellectual emigrant woman Nila suspects the modern art of Picasso museum and the Pompidour. Nila does not show any excitement over Picasso's work . When Benoir says such a great artist, a great man, Picasso Nila disagrees him Nila says that Picasso may have been famous, but as a person he was nothing great. Nila thinks west has become unable to understand the meaning of 'art of arts'. In fact they do not know what art is.

When she saw the modern art at Pompadour, Nila could not believe they were called works of art. The first works she came to was a dress made of beef. The meat was sliced thinly and sewed together to make the dress. There was even a photo of a girl wearing the dress. Nila stood before a blue canvas and tried to

figure out if there was a single brush stroke on it, or even a dot. There was not. But it was 'art'. (269)

After seeing the art of Pompidour Nila asked Benoir how this could be art when there was nothing on the canvas. Benoir said it must be art or it would not be here. Nila could not make sense of it. She lost faith in modern art. These fake arts make westerners feel pride of their modern art. Nila discovers from it that west announces they are modern and civilized people but they are as equal as their fake modern art. They suppose that these things have survived because they have preserved them. Benoir thinks he has preserved Nila's life in foreign land, loves her but in fact he loves himself not for someone who loves him. When Nila comes to understand the selfish love of Benoir she decides to leave him. Mimicing the French life style she becomes aware from the tragic doom in foreign land. Benoir attempts to win the Nila's heart and says,

You are mine, only mine. You cannot leave me. I have given you my all, all the love I had to give. I have loved you and known the meaning of true love, true emotion. I have never loved anyone so deeply; please do not hurt me. I have love and it is all for you, no one else. Keep me at your feet, but do not leave me. (287)

Benior assumed that Nila is honest, generous, loving, patient and selfless but postcolonial expatriate woman Nila was sensuous and thought seriously about her existence with authonomous identity in foreign land. Selfish Frenh lover asked to keep him at Nila's feet but not to leave him. Educated, intellectual woman Nila finds Benoir love as troublesome to achieve her goal. Because she mimiced French language, culture and life style to take revenge upon those who had used and dominated her. She used mimicry as a tool to depatriarchalize and decolonize. Her

excitement to the French literature was a underlying root to resist upon the Westerners who represent themselves civilized and modern people of the world. Thus, Nila's mimicry is not just mockery but protest upon the oppressors. Nila has articulated French language for self-dependent, become enthusiastic to French arts, architects, literature for self-consciousness and mimics French culture and life style for self-existence in foreign land. Mimicry role of Nila becomes the best weapon to resist upon the superior assumptions of male as well as west. Nila is the sun. She says "The sun does not rise in the east or the west. It stays put in one place and makes everyone else dance to its tune" (272). This statement clears that mimicry does not mean that opposition is rejected, but rather that it is seem to encompass more than over opposition. Nila has real Indian identity inside her and adopts French language, culture and life style to fool her oppressors.

## Chapter - IV

### Conclusion

Taslima Nasrin's *French Lover* provides fascinating glimpses of postcolonial Indian immigrant woman who is desperately exiled by the patriarchy and colonial perspective which can be clearly seen by female mimicry. Nasrin's *French Lover* deals with the feministic theme on its overt level but it also contains the postcolonial female masquerade elements on its latent level. Novel has beautifully portrayed the mimetic theme. She indeed captures the psychological side of mimicry. Female mimicry is commonly considered in the context of alternative ability to fool males. Mimicry role of female becomes the best weapon to challenge upon the superior assumption of male.

So far as the concept of resisting to the oppressor directly has ended, the form of revolution has already taken its new form known as mimicry which is not obvious as direct protest. Here, to exist as a female body, mimicry is a sufficient foundation. Everywhere, every time, amid everybody, female body is, emotionally-economically-psychologically-physically sexually-socially-culturally-intellectually in exile. Furthermore, she is in exile among her own species. But the odyssey of a female body always does not end in here. At times it goes further and strives to strike back. It strives to relocate mind and self, and to have an autonomous connection and authority over own body. When this rebel genius of female body disallowed to be labeled as a 'second sex', patriarchy tried to create confusion about her 'self' tagging her a 'lost sex'. But that generation has passed, now the patriarchy has labeled the rebels as 'fallen' for they denied being both inferior and confused. This generation is battling till it acquires what any human deserves-a human dignity regardless of any differences. Nila, the postcolonial New Woman, belongs to this generation of rebel and calling her fallen cannot make her quit or surrender. In the course of novel, Nila realizes that now is the time to undo and

unravel the bogus that has been told and retold since thousands of years back that woman species is inferior.

Initially in the novel, Nila was impounded by the self-asserted superiority of indigenous patriarchy and still existing hegemonic colonial power. She was facing double alienation in the foreign land-from her conjugal home and Western surroundings. Even after knowing all about the hard-hitting situations Nila was facing there, she was not permitted a space in her own natal home, natal land as a morally unacceptable burden. Then she realized: being a female body, if yet persist to face both the internal and external exile forever. And, the rebellious spark in her start to become manifest.

With the help of mimicry role, Nila starts to resist against domination and mastery attitude to relocate her mind and self. She has to resist because she has to demonstrate that she exists and her existence is solely her private property regardless of anybody also who denies her as an individual existence. She has to de-patriarchalize herself from her husband Kishanlal and has to de-colonize her South Asian existence from 'Superior complex' of the western culture. So she starts to articulate French language for self-dependent and adopt French culture for understanding and destabilizing superior complex of the westerners. Nila's mimicry of French language and life style is an existence in foreign land with her female body, female dignity and female identity. Her mimicry is for sovereign authority over her own body, and to rescue the entire race of female body from being exiled.

Unlike Nila, other expatriate emigrants' mimicry of French language, culture and education create double articulation in their identity. Double articulation is uncertainty of their identity. This identity of the colonized subject- 'almost the same but not quite'. It creates double threaten to the mimic person. Even expert manpower like doctors are willingly leaving the non-western world and making their way to Europe in the name of earning handsome amount. They even do not evaluate their knowledge and skills which

can be milestone in their country. Most of the Indians consider that Indian language and education system has no value and avail at all in the world. Bengali people think if they send their children to English medium school, their children will get better and qualitative education and they will have better prestige in society. English speaking fellow is considered as more scholar and more prudent. And even they do not let their children learn their own mother tongue because they think it has no value and use.

Taslina Nasrin's *French Lover*, the exploration of the de-patriarchalized, de-colonized advent-grade version of criteria, with original protagonist Nila is the trial to rescue the female body from being exiled and to redefine, recuperate and redraw the stale patriarchal definition of femininity and female body with the innovative and natural philosophy of humanity. Nasrin has portrayed the adventurous deed of non-western postcolonial woman vividly. This is a real refreshing book to read as it did not bow down to Indian cultural stereotype for a start and did not opt for the fairytale ending. Instead it bow open the concept of being an Indian woman in western society, but made sure never to victimize the main character Nila.

Taslina Nasrin believes in plurality of culture, and she has nothing against western culture as such. But in the past, feelings of cultural superiority among the western rulers were a constant irritant to the people of non-western countries. When fundamentalism looms careful in handling the culture of Asian, African, and Latin American peoples. There is no such thing as a 'superior or inferior' culture, there are only various cultural patterns which make up this beautiful, multicolored mosaic. She capitalizes on the oriental mystique with the brazen sexuality of a 'skin not quit white' in her book *French Lover*. She has presented that not even one man is good very clearly. She has permitted the protagonist to live with men in different relations and has tried to show that we cannot believe any men. As she is known as freedom fighter, this novel is real experiment of her philosophy.

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