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Diasporic Experience of Maria in Paulo Coelho's *Eleven Minutes*

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By

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This is to certify that the thesis entitled "**Diasporic Experience of Maria in Paulo Coelho's *Eleven Minutes***" by **Dipesh Timsina** Submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University has been approved by the undersigned members of the research committee.

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Abstract

Paulo Coelho's *Eleven Minutes* is a tale of a diasporic Brazilian woman in Switzerland, working as a prostitute. She leaves her homeland with the hope of earning more money. Though she earns enough money and gets a lover she does not feel satisfied to stay there. Sense of being dislocated from homeland severely haunts her. Her gullibility is questioned there. These incidents and happenings challenge Maria's self respect, and she moves towards diasporic experiences like sense of loss, alienation, displacement, nostalgia, ambivalence etc. At last, Maria returns Brazil with a good sum of money leaving the luxurious life and even her lover. This act of Maria saves her from losing her identity and it gives her an identity of her own homeland and culture.

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I. Maria in Diaspora

Paulo Coelho's *Eleven Minutes* expresses the central character, Maria's experiences of being a diasporic subject. She undergoes through the experiences like identity crisis, nostalgia, dislocation, sense of loss etc. that almost every diasporic people feel. The movement of her from her homeland, Brazil to a European country, Switzerland creates these all feelings in her. Her location in the distant geography creates the sense of loss of her homeland and the desire to retain it there. However, Maria's situation does not only mark the loss and repulsion. It has some gain and attraction as well. She takes her act of going to Switzerland as an opportunity because the people from relatively poor countries take European location as the land of dream and opportunity. The researcher aims at not unraveling the negative aspects of the diasporic experiences of Maria but also the positive one. The world is becoming culturally hybrid in the age of globalization and industrialization, diasporic location too bear these resemblances. However, the research attempts to see the diasporic subjects who are frequently haunted with the crisis of identity in the distant culture and geography.

The word 'diaspora' derives from the Greek word, meaning 'to disperse' can be the voluntary or forced movement of people from their homelands into new regions. Epistemologically and semantically the term diaspora is derived from that of dispersal experiences of those ancient Jewish people of the distant past. But in the present context, it has come to merge into the issue of hybridity.

Diaspora cause the sense of dislocation, identity crisis, double consciousness, ambivalence, alienation etc. They have sense of loss in the intensified form. To lessen it they create the imaginary homelands in the mind as they are distanced from their root. Diasporic subjects have the intense feeling of being dislocated for they have been rooted in their culture

but in the diasporic location, they have to encounter and adapt themselves in the alien culture in the alien geography. Such situation makes them feel dislocated and may lead to cultural disintegration as they can't adopt the culture they wish. As they encounter the alien culture, forced migration, either as a quest for employment, including indentured servitude, or as the result of enslavement, scattered large numbers of people around the globe and large population of their descendents remained in the diaspora. As they are caught in between two cultures, they belong to neither rather than to both. They have at the same time plural and partial identity. This sort of cultural identity crisis makes those subjects a psychological refugee.

It would be wrong to interpret the location of diaspora in terms of its negativity only. As diaspora persists between two cultures, it gives birth to hybridity or the amalgam of cultures. Lois Tyson is of the opinion that "hybridity does not only consist of antagonism between different cultures but is rather a productive, exciting, positive force in a shrinking world that is itself becoming more and more culturally hybrid" (422). For Tyson, the state of cultural hybridity brings the positive change.

Diaspora is the condition of dilemma in which people's actual identity gets slightly changed in course of scattering from place to place and time to time. Language, culture, memory and religion are main controversial aspects of the diaspora. So, diasporic experience is defined not by purity or essence but by the recognition of heterogeneity and diversity. With the change of time and place, people get different kinds of experience. They bear different kinds of identities. The diasporic consciousness presupposes the predominance of such feeling as an alienation, dispersal, longing for the ancestral homeland, a double identification with the originary homeland and the adapted country, identity crisis, remembering myths related to the homeland, protest against discrimination of all sorts in a new land etc, the

metaphor of imaginary homelands does cum up the condition of the diasporic communities as well. Salman Rushdie puts his idea of diasporic situation in this way:

The effect of mass migration has been the creation of radically new types of human beings: people who root themselves in ideas rather than places in memories as much as material things; people who have been obliged to define themselves- because they have been defined by others- by their otherness; people in whose deepest selves strange fusion occurs, unprecedented unions between what they were and where they find themselves... Migrants must of necessity, make a new imaginative relationship with the world. (124)

Diasporic writings basically focus on issues of migrants people. It is an outcome of their experiences; the experiences basically tell us stories of their lives, within their immigrant background. It captures the two invariables of their experience: exile and homeland. All the diasporic literature is an attempt to negotiate between these two polarities. Diasporic writing, in fact, is the wordy expression of diasporic subjects' experiences.

This novel is presented in third person narrative with Maria's abundance of writing in her diary where she expresses her intense feelings. The novel is originally written in Brazilian language and is later on translated into English and many other languages that helped the reader around the world to read his novel. The novel unfolds the reader about the diasporic experience like sense of loss, ambivalence, double consciousness, dislocation nostalgia through the narrator and Maria's feeling expressed in the diary.

In the novel, Paulo Coelho deals with the cultural experiences of diaspora especially of the third-World people. Coelho has employed Maria, a self conscious Brazilian woman to show the diasporic experience of third- World people. She belongs to a middle class family who always dreams of making her dream, a prosperous life, come true. She goes to

Switzerland when she is convinced of a prosperous life, an attractive job with handsome earning. It happens when she meets a Swiss tourist who is lured by her beauty and proposes her to become a Samba dancer in his country. As third-World people take European land of being their dream land and the place of making their economic status strong she accepts his proposal along with taking her parents' consent who also readily accept. In the new region, she feels alienated in the very first of her arrival in Switzerland. She suffers from the sense of loss and dislocation. She, thus, creates imaginary homelands in her imagination as well as in her writing. Her stay in the new geography makes her understand that she has longing to retain to her own culture, and region. As she is from the third-World, she also enjoys the stay because she wants to take the opportunity of the developed place and the facilities available there. But, in her deeper psyche she desires to return and this strong desire drags her back to her own origin at the end as well.

During her stay in that alien geography, she comes across many hardships and difficulties like language, culture, of being generalized and marginalized and these all circumstances make her diasporic feeling intense. She has voluntarily migrated to that land that is why she is not so much traumatized by her situation in the foreign land. She is a girl having the will power so she adjusts herself after the realization of the fact that as an outsider she is not going to get a prestigious job there. Her situation is not good there so she uses her memory and imagination and creates imaginary homeland in Switzerland to escape from sense of loss and displacement.

Maria's situation is the example of diasporic experience because this is the predicament of all diasporic subjects. Many diasporic writers like Michel Ondaatje, V.S. Naypaul, Salman Rushdie try to reflect their past life of their original land while living in distanced geography from their root. Michel Ondaatje, a Srilankan in origin living in Canada

tries to capture the distance past of his origin through memory in his novel *Running in the Family*. He has been unable to reclaim about his father and he uses his memory to regain it. He says that his father will remain one of those books he longs to read whose pages remain uncut. Ondaatje has to rely upon only faith and imaginative insight as means of understanding his father and of feeling the empty space in his own identity. It becomes increasingly clear that Ondaatje's desire to understand his family is at a bottom desire to know and understand his father. His lack of knowledge about his father is an empty space in his identity and this emptiness haunts him throughout.

Salman Rushdie also reflects his diasporic experiences while living in England and through the use of broken mirrors he tries to reclaim his past. He goes through his memories of past in his root to lessen the pain of expatriate life. He also expresses that he is destined to be bicultural and bilingual, the experience of diasporic subjects in the adapted country in *Imaginary Homelands* in this way:

(L)ooking back at India, does so through guilt-tinted spectacles. (I am of course, once more, talking about myself.) I am speaking now of those of us who emigrated . . . and I suspect that there are times when we move seems wrong to us all, when we seem to ourselves, past-lapsarian men and women. We are Hindus who have crossed the black water; we are Muslims who eat pork. And, as a result- as my use of Christian notion of the fall indicates- we are now partly of the west. Our identity is at once plural and partial. Sometimes we feel that we straddle two cultures; at other times, that we fall between two stools. (15)

Rushdie's above mentioned extract vividly justifies that as a diaspora subject one has to follow the cultures of the settled geography. It is difficult at the beginning. One has to

accustom himself to survive there. Diasporic subjects do not have a homogenous identity because they have to face and remain in between two cultures. They have the predicament to be bicultural. Rushdie is Muslim and his culture does not allow him to take pork but he has been residing in England, therefore, he has to take it. It shows the guilt-tinged concept of Rushdie but he has to accustom in it to survive there. This leads to the double consciousness- the knowledge of both culture-in diasporic people. Rushdie gestures towards the diasporic experience leading to cultural hybridity.

In the novel, *Eleven Minutes*, Maria feels the situation of unhomeliness when she settles in Switzerland. She, during her stay in the alien location, comes across the experience of double consciousness- the acquaintance of both cultures. So, it can be said that her diasporic condition makes a hybrid identity. She is Westerner as well as non-westerner or Easterner. She, right after her arrival in Switzerland, falls in dilemma-whether she should return or she should grab the opportunity of knowing many things about Europe that many of her relatives and friends of Brazil are deprived of. After being known about the reality by a Brazilian woman working there that she won't get whatever she had been promised in Brazil in her diary she writes:

And what's the point of escaping anyway? I have only just arrived. I haven't seen anything yet. What's so awful about having to dance seven nights a week? I used to do that for pleasure, now I do it for money and fame. My legs don't ache, the only difficult thing is maintaining that fixed smile.

I can choose either to be a victim of the world or an adventure in search of treasure. It's all a question of how I view my life. (39)

Diasporic subjects from third -World find European location as the platform to earn money for their better future. Though they don't possess any prestigious job there, they are able to

earn. So, despite being dissatisfied with their present stay they compromise with it. In the novel, though Maria does not find her circumstances as she had expected she decides to stay for earning to make her life in Brazil prosperous. And obviously making the plan what she will do with the money in Brazil provides solace in the diasporic situation.

She comes across many diasporic experiences in Switzerland. She needs to learn the French language. So she enrolls “in a French course that was run in the morning” (45). She finds a different culture there. She finds “men wearing brightly coloured clothes and lots of gold bracelets, women who always wore a headscarf, children who learned me quickly than the grown ups” (45).

Diasporic subjects become bicultural, bilingual in the alien geography. They cannot forget their culture and language as well as they have to follow the host country’s culture and language to sustain. The diasporic situation cannot simply be negatively associated. Such experiences give birth to the cultural hybridity. This experience does not bring an antagonism but also shows the possibility of cultural admixture. It becomes the harbinger of multiculturalism because the world itself is being more and more multicultural. However, they feel the sense of dislocation as their culture and language in the subordinated position whereas the settled place’s becomes the dominant one.

These above mentioned conditions are responsible for hybrid position and double consciousness of the diasporic people. Maria’s hybrid identity in Switzerland, is obviously the outcome of her diasporic condition. Diasporic location creates the sense of alienation and loneliness. In the alien culture in alien geography diasporic subjects find themselves alienated. As they have to face a new culture and most often not having anyone to share the feelings they feel lonely. Maria, staying in Switzerland feels that she is the “loneliest person on the face of this Earth” (83). Her diasporic location has made her feel so.

Alienation is the part of diasporic subjects. Diasporic subjectivity leads a person to alienation. It is the condition of marginality which brings alienation in the life of person. On the one hand, an individual feels not belonging to either of the two cultures. On the other hand, the people there do not accept his identity that he bears. He is placed in the marginal position. Thus, his inner feeling of being marginal is the cause of alienation. As Maria has remained in the marginal position in the alien geography the sense of being alienated becomes intense in her.

Paulo Coelho's *Eleven Minutes* has received numerous criticisms after it got published in English language in 2003. Translation in English of this novel by Margaret Jull Costa helped this book earn both appraisal and criticisms.

In the words of critic Paul Di Filippo, the novel depicts “sacred sex. A paradoxical, utopian impossibility or a life sustaining, attainable goal? This is the major question that underpins Paulo Coelho's new novel, *Eleven Minutes*, the tale of Maria, a naïve young woman from Brazil who becomes a high class prostitute in Switzerland” (4). Filippo finds the nature or rather unthought aspect of sex in human life. He finds the possibility of making sex holy even in the contaminated circumstances if the determination is firm.

Similarly, the author himself justifies the idea of sex as something that is important in life in one of his interviews. Paulo Coelho avers:

We believe that there is standard for everything, and we believe too, that if we stick to that stand we will be safe. Because of this, we have created a kind of ‘standard sex’, which in fact consists of nothing but the string of lies: vaginal orgasm, virility above all else, that it is better to pretend than to disappoint your partner, etc. As a direct consequence of this millions of people have been left feeling frustrated unhappy and guilty. It also lies at the roots of aberrant

behaviours, for example, pedophilia, incest and rape. Why do we behave in this way with something that is something important? (1-2)

The author himself surfaces the matrix of the novel that sex is something that is important to all but we have accustomed ourselves to live a pompous life by which we are not able to understand its importance. He suggests us to look at the other side of sex. For him, sex can be made sacred.

Jacket studies the novel in association to self-discovery. In this regard he examines : “In this odyssey of self-discovery, Maria has to chose between pursuing path of darkness, sexual pleasure for its own sake, or risking everything to find her own “inner light” and the possibility of sacred sex, sex in the context of love” (2). He also finds the novel to be dealing about sex and possibility of its piousness.

In this regard it has become clear that the novel has been analyzed from more or less similar perspectives. But the novel has not been seen through the perspective of diasporic experience. The researcher has made an attempt to see the novel from the diasporic point of view. As researcher believes such a perspective to the novel will create a new meaning of it.

The research uses the methodology of postcolonial identity – diaspora based on the criticism of Homi K. Bhabha’s *The Location of Culture*, Salman Rushdie’s *Imaginary Homelands*, Stuart Hall’s *Cultural Identity and Diaspora*.

In this research work, there are three chapters; the first chapter contains general introduction of the novel from the viewpoint of diasporic experience of the central character, Maria entitled “Maria in Diaspora”. The second chapter contains the diasporic condition leading to hybridity or syncretism, sense of loss, dislocation, ambivalence, nostalgia etc. Furthermore, the second chapter describes the employed methodology along with its different aspects of diasporic situation like identity crisis, nostalgia, dislocation, ambivalence and this

is entitled as "Maria's Attraction and Repulsion towards Her Diaporic Location in *Eleven Minutes*". Finally, the third chapter presents the finding of the research work which will be a brief synopsis.

II. Maria's Attraction and Repulsion towards Her Diasporic Location in *Eleven Minutes*

Eleven Minutes is a tale of a diasporic subject, Maria who voluntarily leaves her originary place Brazil and goes to a European country, Switzerland to make her dreams come true. She goes there and hopes to make her life successful by working as a Samba star. Thus, the novel delineates a powerful portrayal of a diasporic subject of the third- World in the European geography.

Diasporic experience explores the identities forged in the crucible of multiple cultures. Identities are constructed through multiple specificities language, history, gender, class. Our identity is bound with the culture and it shapes our further development. Our identity relates itself with the cultural values and the loss of such identity and cultural heritage emerges as a dominant problem among diasporic subjects. The accelerating globalization and industrialization has, to large extent, diminished the solid identity. However, when a person remains in the distant geography from his originary place, the identity of the subject raises a crucial question. Maria as a non-Western grows up in her own culture in Brazil and has internalized it too. But when she moves to Switzerland, the culture of that place becomes the new one for her. Her location in the new culture, geography makes her think about her own identity and it becomes important for her. The cultural mixture leads her to hybridity, sense of loss and ambivalence. The alien geography makes her feel alienated and lonely. She has to accustom herself to follow the culture of the host country though she has the strong longing and love for her own culture.

Maria goes to Switzerland and stays there for more than one year. It is made clear by different diaspora theorists that whether people settle to the different geography temporarily or permanently, whether they are rich or poor, all diasporic subjects come across the same predicament. Regarding this issue Gabriel sheffer in his book, *Diaspora politics: At Home*

Abroad says: "Understanding diasporas and their behavior does not depend on whether at the time of migration from their homelands migrants were rich or poor for upon arrival in their host countries both rich and poor migrants have to deal with the similar problems and face similar dilemmas" (74). This situation aptly coheres in Maria's life too. During her stay in Switzerland she faces similar predicaments of dilemma: whether settling there or returning to the home, the question of her identity, cultural exchange, dislocation, sense of belongingness, nationalism, alienation etc.

She works there as a prostitute and with the help of her intelligence she is able to be famous among her customers. She relies on memory which is one of the strongest tools for diasporic subjects to survive in the distant geography. As she is geographically distanced from her homeland and culture she creates the imaginary homeland in her mind. She speculates the future life in Brazil after her return.

During her stay in Switzerland, she falls in love with a spatially distanced diasporic subject from France, Ralf Hart, a famous painter. She is content to be in love with her boyfriend there but her sense of belongingness overpowers her. Had she stayed with him there, her life would have been bed of roses and could have enjoyed all the facilities there. However, she has the desire to be near to her own culture and homeland so, she returns to Brazil at last. This step of Maria shows that a few diasporic subjects are able to take the initiative to save their identity and their homeland and culture is the dearest thing in their life. Maria, therefore, returns home to save identity victoriously.

The narrator presents Maria as a woman having strong desire to gain the prosperity in her life. She belongs to a lower middle class and works as a sales girl in a draper's shop but she doesn't seem satisfied with the work for it doesn't assure her secured future. Her grabbing of opportunity offered by European leads her to Switzerland. So, it is the story of

the expression of diasporic experience like alienation, sense of loss, rootlessness in the distance geography. It is a story of a Brazilian woman's attraction and repulsion toward Switzerland due to her diasporic location. This ambivalence is felt in the very situation when she lands in Switzerland. When she is in Brazil the word Switzerland, work and dollars "sound like the bells of paradise in whatever language they are spoken" (20). It shows that the third-World people take the European countries as the land of dreams and opportunities. But, when she arrives in Switzerland and knows that she is not getting whatever had been promised. Despite that she keeps on working until she finds better opportunity. Her habit of writing diary helps her heave the sigh of relief where she writes:

One day, at some distant future date, I'll get my ticket home and I can go back to Brazil, marry the owner of the draper's shop listen to the malicious comments of these friends who, never having taken any risks themselves, can only see other people's failures. No, I can't go back like that. I'd rather throw myself out of the plane as it's crossing the ocean. (42-43)

Homi K. Bhabha writes about diasporic condition in his book *The Location of Culture*. He says that the new location creates the feeling of exclusion and inclusion in diasporic people. This leads the diasporic subjects to the feeling that they bear the identities of outsider and insider in the distant geography. He says:

The 'beyond' is neither a new horizon nor a leaving behind of the past beginnings and endings may be the sustaining myths of the middle year; but in the fin de siècle, we find ourselves in the moment of transit where space and time cross to produce complex figures of difference and identity, past and present, inside and outside, inclusion and exclusion. For there is a sense of disorientation, a disturbance of direction, in the 'beyond' an exploratory,

restless movement caught so well in the French rendition of the words au-dela here and there, on all sides, fort/da hither and thither, back and forth. (1)

Bhabha opines that when diasporic subjects move to the foreign land it does not become a new horizon for them. They can't relinquish their past life totally and accept new location as the shelter either. Diasporas always find themselves in betweenness of the two cultures. Diasporas have two polarities of standing: analepsis and prolepsis. Analepsis involves a negotiation with a retreating history, past traditions and customs. It produces nostalgia, memory and reclamation of the past. Prolepsis involves a different treatment of time where the diasporic subjects look forward to seeking new vistas, new chances. This produces themes of the ethics of work, survival and cultural assimilation. Diasporic subjects seek to survive hostility, adapt to new circumstances, and gaze upon the future. As diaspora reside in between position their identity becomes complex and the position becomes hybrid Maria reaches to Switzerland and she finds it as her destination that she had longed for long time. She becomes happy for she feels that she has been able to tread on her dream land. She feels boasted and compares herself with her Brazilian colleagues who are not able to take the steps she has made. This sort of feeling is the outcome of the voluntary movement of her to her dream land. But, no sooner she reaches there than she realizes that this new horizon is not final destination. Diasporic subjects cannot totally forget their past and adjust in the new circumstances. They have to move between past and present. Maria's feeling becomes ironic when she finds that the new horizon is not her final destination and her position is subsidiary as an immigrant in Switzerland.

Diaspora resides between the host country culture and their homeland culture due to their acquaintance of both cultures. In the host country, they live and struggle to grab the success but their real identity is bound with their homelands that they have left. The dispersed

people are deeply rooted in ethnicity, language of their homeland. Though they are in the alien geography they cannot forget their culture which is the base of their identity. Despite having the hyphenated identity they take their own culture as the source of the survival in the foreign geography when they realize the fact that they are not able to retain their own culture totally in the adapted country, they try to make a contact with homeland to regain it though it is possible partially.

Maria feels the intensity of love towards her own country in Switzerland. In an attempt to retain her culture and custom, she befriends another Brazilian woman, Vivian. As diasporic subjects have the reverence to the things and people of their root because they can share the similar feelings and experience to each other, Vivian becomes the only person for Maria who is the nearest person for her. In the like manner, Maria's diasporic location creates the sense of nationalism and patriotic feeling in her. She "thought of Brazil, of the impossibility of finding a partner with whom to share that different universe and since Brazil was the most important thing in her life, she took off her shoes" (195). Radhakrishnan opines about the nationalistic feeling that arises in the people when they are distanced in this way, "It is precisely this obsession with the sacredness of one's origins that leads people to disrespect the history of other people and to exalt one's own. Feeling deracinated in the diaspora can be painful but politics of origins can not be remedy" (65).

Radhakrishnan is of the opinion that diaspora builds the patriotic feeling in the host country. As their nationalistic feeling overpowers them they tend to disrespect others culture. Due to the existence of cultures together in the country, Maria is not able to forget her Brazilian culture. Time and again, she remembers her homeland, her language and culture and people as these all are more important than host country culture and language. For her, Brazil is the dearest thing in her life and her language is the most ardent need because the

host country language doesn't allow her to express her desires, feelings and emotions. Though Maria shows the intense love and respect for her own culture and homeland she doesn't tend to disrespect the host country culture. The intensity of love towards her own country is so powerful that she even doesn't mention the disrespect towards the host country. Nevertheless, she has to use the language and custom of the host country to survive there.

Diasporic subject's spatial move involves a de-territorialization and re-territorialization connected by journey. De-territorialization is the loss of territory. It is both geographical and cultural. Diasporic experience is concerned with space, landscapes and journeys. Since diaspora involves a change of place through journey, the loss of territory is almost always accompanied by the gain of new ones. Dislocation from is followed by a relocation to. Diasporic subjects' spatial move thus revolves around home and foreign country, between the familiar and the strange, the old and the new.

Diaspora especially in the age of globalization is a consciousness-raising phenomena, where cosmopolitan justice and global inequality run alongside the feeling of nostalgia, imaginative reconstruction of the homeland and identities. The sense of identity is an exercise of exploring multiplicities of location and subjecthoods. Diasporic subjects feel estranged in the new geography. In the same way, after finding herself in the distant territory she writes in her diary: 'I was a stranger in the strange land" (234). Such feeling arises in her as she finds herself in the geography that doesn't belong to her.

Diaspora have to face different challenge in the alien geography as they are mistreated there : Diaspora are kept in the minority group where they have no say of their voice, furthermore, as Maira is a person from third-World she is mistreated by Europeans. When she does not get as she has been promised she threatens her boss for suing a case to the court. After that event she gets the five thousands francs as compensation that the European boss

accuses her and says, "The Brazilian women could not be trusted" (45). She faces the orientalist tendency of generalizing the non-European, so to speak. In this regard, Edward Said opines about Western perception about non-West in this way:

. . . this study deals with matters that always complete attention, all of them connected not only with western conceptions and treatment of the other but also with singularly important role played by western culture in what Vico called the world of nations, lastly, for readers in the so-called third., not so much of western polities and of the non-western world in those polities as of the strength of western cultural discourse. (356)

Said's *Orientalism* has tried to explore Western treatment to non-West. Said is of the belief that west has the tendency to other the non-western people. For them, they are the repository of evils and they are untrustworthy. Non-Western people should never be trusted for they are irrational and guided by violence. So, Said has attempted to put on light how Western polities are operated in the non-Western world by creating discourses, later on, which becomes truth for all. The boss of Maria tries to exploit her by not paying the amount that she deserves but Maria, having the strong will power and some knowledge about the judiciary system of Switzerland, gets the compensation from him. It is the Western attitude to generalize and build the stereotypes about non-Western people. In fact, Western always allege the positive attribute to themselves and negative to the non-Western and by contrast to whom they have been able to define themselves positively and justify any sorts of domination they have found advantageous.

Diasporic location is made by the mixed experience of culture that leads to multiculturalism. It is not only the loss of the homeland and culture but it is also the opportunity to understand multiple cultures. Though diasporic people are distanced from their

geography and culture, language and religion, they have become able to understand and acknowledge the differences as well. This leads them to the hybridity and the plural identity. They remember their own culture for solace and the host country culture for survival. It creates the double consciousness in them. Such state creates the schizophrenic state of the diasporic individuals as they seek to combine two cultures and language without abandoning either. Maria, while remaining in Switzerland knows about the custom and culture that does not belong to her as well as she tells them about her own culture she finds:

. . .there she met people of all creeds, beliefs and ages, men wearing brightly coloured clothes and lots of gold bracelets, women who always wore a headscarf, children who learned more quickly than the grownups. She felt proud when she found out that everyone knew about her country-carnival, the samba, football and the most famous person in the world, pelê. At first she wanted to be nice and so tried to correct their pronunciation (It's pelê ! Pelê), but after a while, she gave up, since they also insisted on calling her Maria.
(45)

When Maria falls in love with the painter Ralf their meeting with each other becomes a fertile space to exchange the culture. Maria tells about her culture that "Brazilians have a strange superstition: when you visit someone for the first time, you must not be the one to open the door when you leave because if you do, you will never return to their house" (133). She makes others know about her culture, and residing there she also knows so many things. Similarly, when she goes to the room for having sex as she is a prostitute, her male counterpart, Terence gets to know about the culture through Maria. She says, "I was just thinking that in Brazil we have a superstition that you should never light more than three

things with the same match"(183). Homi K. Bhabha, thus, takes the diasporic location as fertile zone where the cultural exchange is possible. He says:

The needs to think beyond narratives of originary and initial subjectivities and focus on those moments or processes that are produced in the articulation cultural differences. These in-between spaces provide the terrain for elaborating strategies of self hood-singular or communal-that elaborating strategies of selfhood-singular or communal that initiate new sings of identity, and innovative sites of collaboration, and contestation, in the act of defining the idea of society self. (1-2)

Homi K. Bhabha sees disjuncture and displacement as a productive condition. We need to rethink the very idea of plurality of identity, as it is not only the hyphenated one but also the opportunity to understand the cultural difference so as to build up a multicultural society as in this age of globalization the world is becoming more and more culturally hybrid. Despite the fact that the diasporic subject can't fully retain their own culture they solace themselves by remembering it and sharing it with other people. Notion of hybridity and in betweenness, thus, are to be seen as potentially positive.

Diasporic subjects have plural and partial identity. Identity is bound up with the nation of location. Feeling of being culturally alienated creates problem in making the identity. The loss of root and nostalgia to the past, which always haunts people, are expressed through a variety of ways and writing is one of them to reflect the problem of cultural identity. Maria, being alienated from her geography and culture in Switzerland writes what she feels in her diary. She expresses her experience, her situation, loneliness and everything that touches her.

Identity is the process how we describe ourselves to each other. Culture creates pressure for conformity today as it is often referred as the individual or group identity. Identities are the products of discourses and relate the individual's worldly perception. Identities are both self-made, produced through the interplay of names and social roles foisted with particular choices, families, communities and individualism, moreover, to grapple with their real historical experiences. Maria, as a diasporic subject thinks that she has hyphenated identity. She is Brazilian in origin but a European in her settlement. She becomes a psychological refugee in the distant geography. Maria remaining in Switzerland feels that she was "a stranger in the strange land" (234). She feels herself to be stranger because of her diasporic location. Regarding this issue Stuart Hall says:

The first position defines 'cultural identity' in terms of one shared culture, a sort of collective 'one true self, hiding inside many other, more superficial or artificially imposed selves; which people with a shared history and ancestry hold in common. Cultural identity in the second sense is a matter of becoming as well as being. It belongs to the future as much as to the past. It is not something which already exists, transcending place, times, history and culture.

(48)

Hall opines that identities are the products of discourses and related with the individual's worldly perception. They are not things which exist simply there with universal qualities rather they are discursive constructions. In this sense, identities are constituted or made. Stuart Hall consciously puts it: "Identities are names we give to the different ways we are positioned by, and position ourselves within, the narratives of the past" (225). Hall is of the opinion that identity is bound with different cultural aspects. And the notion of identity for diasporic subjects is more crucial. Their identity never remains constant and this is defined

by the circumstances and surroundings. It is also related to our root as well. Diasporic subjects' identity is like a identity in progress.

Diasporic subjects have two different feeling at the time: optimistic and nostalgic feeling about the loss of the homeland. Maria is satisfied to be in Switzerland as she had dreamt it for since her childhood and the opportunity to earn money there. She is content to be there when she gets all the luxury of life she can use. But due to her feeling of sense of loss after leaving her homeland, Brazil she is unable to forget her cultural roots. She says, "What's the point of escaping anyway. I've only just arrived" (39). She wants to achieve the success by staying there in the distant geography. Radhakrishnan exposes his views about diasporic condition which leads to the mixed attitude as:

And in a way, the Diaspora in an excellent opportunity to think through some of the vexed questions: Solidarity, and criticism, belongingness and distance, insider spaces and outside spaces, identity as investion and identity as natural subject positionality and politics of representation, rootedness and rootlessness. (213)

Radhakrishnan opines that diasporic condition gives a chance to understand the problem of multiple identities. Diasporas are rooted in one culture but they also feel rootlessenss in foreign culture. So they go through belongingness as well as distance from their culture. For Radhakrishnan diasporic condition gives chance to understand the fact that our situation in the distance location creates a dilemma in us.

Maria, however, does not feel that she is satisfied with the luxury only. The land she was born, the language she speaks are also important factors to her. Even though she enjoys the facilities of the developed city in Europe she equally loves her things that truly belong to her. However, she is not able to define her identity truly. As she is caught in between two

cultures that never leave her, she can't define herself independently. She encounters European culture but at the same time she loves her Brazilian culture. So, she moves between two cultures. Maria feels that she needs to stay there for the prosperity of her future ahead but she also longs not to be far from her culture and country that is " the most important thing in her life" (195).

Maria's conflicting ideas are the outcome of hybrid identity and position. Most of the diasporic people suffer due to their desire to belong to the host country to develop their career. As a result of this desire, they develop mimicking nature in the host country. They have to internalize the habits and systems of the culture that does not belong to them. This phenomenon leads diasporic people to create the plural but partial identity. Due to this syncretic identity one cannot define oneself clearly. And this state of psychological limbo raises the problem of defining the diasporic subject that leads them to dual feeling for homeland and host country. For Maria her country is the most important thing for her as well as she is content to be in her host country as it provides her with the different facilities and development along with the chance to earn more money which is far better than her own country. Radhakrishnan raises the problem of not having the authentic identity in this way:

Whereas at home one could be just Indian or Chinese, here one is constrained to become Chinese–Indian, Indian, or Asian American. This leads us to the question: Is the "India" in Indian and the "Indian" in Indian–American the same way therefore interchangeable: which of the two is authentic and which are merely strategic or reactive? (207)

Radhakrishnan gestures toward the plural identity of diasporic people. He avers that a person belongs to his homeland culture at home and thus his identity is single. But when he becomes a diasporic figure, his identity can't be pure rather his identity becomes plural.

Diasporic people can't relate their identity solely with their homeland rather their identity depends on both countries' culture. So, Radhakrishnan states the idea of plural identity rather than authentic identity of the diasporic people.

Identities are created in the fields of socio-political, cultural, racial, ideological and national position. It is constituted by means of representation and discourse. The identity of every human being engages in a dynamic interchange of beliefs, attitudes, ideologies, sentiments and other states of consciousness. Identities created through the false representation, results into the identity crisis to the people represented. Crisis of identity occurs both in individual and collective level. In individual level, identity crisis may affect the whole race in which the individual belongs. In the novel, Maria's diasporic situation, pain, experiences, nostalgia cohere with all the diaspora in the alien geography.

Diasporic subjects feel alienated in the alien geography. In other words, the causes of alienation is diasporic situation. Because of their present absence with that of their past homeland, root, culture, language and custom diasporic subject feel alienated in adopted land. Memory of homeland haunts them because of their marginal position and the lack of someone to share the intimate feelings in the new land. When they cannot get self-respect and identity in that land they become stranger in their new geography. Physical land does not give them shelter psychologically. Their presence becomes absence once at a time. Absence in presence makes them sense their identity going back to past and original culture. Alienation is also related to such terms as displacement, dislocation, diaspora and exile. And diasporic sense of alienation creates a kind of cultural obliteration because the diasporic subjects also realize the loss of origin, and therefore, express a feeling of loss of homes.

In the novel, Maria is also distanced from her own land, culture that creates the sense of alienation in her. As she can't reclaim her own culture there, she has the strong desire to be

near to her culture, language. Maria knows that "she is the loneliest person on the face of this earth herself"(83). And, as she feels alienated from her own culture, she creates the strong desire to be near to her culture and she says, "One day at some distance future date, I'll get my ticket home and I can go back to Brazil" (42). Maria feels alienated because of her diasporic condition. Regarding the issue Edward Said says: "The exile there exists in a median state neither completely at one with the new setting nor fully disencumbered of the old, with half involvements and half detachments, nostalgic and sentimental on one level, and adept mimic or a secret outcast on another" (36).

Edward Said opines that to be in the alien geography is to feel nowhere. Thus, alienation gets emerged out of the condition where diasporic subject do not completely feel adjusted in the new circumstances. Moreover, they are not cut off from the nexus with their own culture. When there is alienation it is obvious that one's present is not favourable and he becomes nostalgic. He begins remembering his past, root and culture. They adopt the culture there by mimicing to survive in the alien geography on the one hand, and on the other they become sentimental while remembering their own culture. While nostalgia for the lost place or way of life is always present in some other form, the diasporic subjects would also find the relevance in the new environment having symbolic link with the imagined community of diaspora.

Diasporic subjects from the non-Western location have the tendency of mimicking the culture of dominance so as to show themselves resembling with the dominant culture. The notion of mimicry often comes from the unequal power relationship. By following the culture of the dominant one they feel that they become able to gain the high social strata. Maria in Switzerland adopts various cultures that are obviously marked as superior one. Maria "eats in a Japanese restaurant, even though she did not understand quite what she was eating,

knowing only that it was very expensive and feeling in a mood to indulge herself in every luxury. She was happy, she didn't need to wait for a phone call now or to watch every centime she spent" (63). She eats such the expensive food despite not having the knowledge of the food stuffs that she eats. Regarding this issues of mimicry, Homi K. Bhabha avers:

Mimicry is, thus, the sign of a 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 different or recalcitrance which coheres the dominant strategic function of colonial power, intensifies surveillance and poses an immanent threat to both normalized knowledge's and disciplinary power. (123)

Bhabha opines that as the people belonging to the vulnerable culture are imposed the belief that by following the dominant culture one get the prestige, the people belonging to the subsidiary culture try to follow it. The subject is conscious that he/she does not belong to it. However, he/she uses it only for getting the favour that he/she belongs to it. The follower does not realize the fact that, though he follows it he is othered later on. The unequal power relationship makes it happen. Despite knowing the fact that the user does not fall under that category of superior culture he does so only for getting observed that he belongs to it. They all share in a discursive process by which the excess produced by the ambivalence of mimicry does not merely rupture the discourse, but becomes transformed into an uncertainty which fixes the diasporic subjects as a partial present. This Sort of 'Inappropriateness' disturbs the normality of the dominant culture itself. The threat inherent in mimicry thus comes not from an overt resistance but from the way in which it continually suggests an identity not acute like the dominant culture.

The novel describes an immigrant's experience of discrimination and ignorance that causes alienation multiplicity of identity and existential crisis as a whole. Maria's nearness to her religion, ethnicity and religion as well as her inclination to her host country keeps her in the state of confusion and crisis of identity.

Diasporic subjects face various difficulties in terms of food, language etc. and to cope with these hardship they adopt the culture of the host country. Maria feels the necessity to learn the French language to make it beneficial for her work. She, "enrolls in a French course" (45). She "discovers some delicious chocolate, a cheese she had never eaten" (45). Maria also realizes the fact that she has to abide by the customs, and law of the host country when she watches the dispute among the prostitutes of Milan's hotel. When the police arrive there both woman choose to remain silence. It "was the law of silence, or what Italian prostitute like to call omerta; any problem to be resolved in Reo de Berne, from love to death, would be resolved, but without interferences of the law" (170). Regarding the issue of difficulties and the adjustment of the diasporic subjects Gabriel Sheffer says:

The critical formative stage in the development is reached after migrants have overcome the initial shocks involved in leaving their homelands. Only afterward they begin to cope with the difficult problems involved in settling in host countries: interacting with the culture prevailing there confronting the daunting tasks of finding jobs and renting or buying suitable housing, establishing social relationships, and finding sympathetic and effective support system. (77)

Sheffer avers that diasporic subjects consummate their initial adjustments and solve the immediate problems involved in settling down in host counties by assimilating themselves with the host country culture. When diasporic subjects accept the fact that they have been

distanced from their land and culture, they accustom themselves in the host country by modeling themselves according to it. Despite having the disparity of being detached diasporic subjects have to adjust themselves. In the novel, Maria also seeks the job and spends a large sum of money to make her photographs so that she is called by the model agencies. She rents the house and equips herself with everything she needs to run her life for establishing the social relationship in the host country, she often visits the library and befriends the librarian there. She learns many things from her about the place and country. She develops the habit of saluting the police wherever they appear as she has been suggested to do so to avoid interruption from the police.

Diasporic subjects are nostalgic and there is the strong sense of loss of their culture in them. During their stay in the alien geography and culture they often remember their homeland and the past life. Sense of loss and nostalgia has reciprocity for diasporic subjects become nostalgic whenever they are overwhelmed by the sense of loss. Maria remembers her days in Brazil, her family and she feels as if she were detached from them. She time and again gives call to her family. As she stays alone in Switzerland she, "missed her hometown, missed Brazil, missed her mother's arms" (54). Their sense of loss is compensated by their nostalgia. Whether diasporic subjects are writer or normal people they face the same predicament and Salman Rushdie, about this context, says:

It may be that writer in my position, exiles or emigrants or expatriates are haunted by some sense of loss, some urge to reclaim to look back, even at the risk of being mutated into salt. But if we do look back, we must also do so in the knowledge-which gives rise to profound uncertainties- that our physical alienation from India almost inevitable means that we will be capable of reclaiming precisely the things that was lost. (10)

Rushdie believes that diasporic subjects always feel the sense of loss: the loss of the culture, custom and everything that belongs to their homeland. As diasporic subjects feel themselves that they are in minority in the host country, custom and everything that belong to their homeland. As diasporic subjects feel themselves that they are in minority in the host country they try to revive it. Diasporic subjects can't reclaim their culture totally as they are distanced from it. Though it is obvious that diasporic subject can't retain their culture they create it through the help of memory.

Diasporic people have hunger for their cultural root, race, and nationality. That's why Maria becomes nostalgic when she meets some Brazilian prostitutes in Switzerland and listens to some Brazilian music. It makes her feel comfort in her solitary life. She takes her diasporic condition normal as many people from her country are also working there and are away from their homeland. Maria's heart gets solace when she meets the people from her own country and listens to the music.

When a person feels strange in a foreign land he tries to search his culture in the foreign land because he feels secure with his culture and his culture can give solace and comfort to his feeling of sense of loss and displacement. We can find similar case with Maria. Her listening to the Brazilian music justifies that she has the intense desire to be near to her culture. The reason for her happiness is her desire to create cultural homogeneity in the foreign land because she was feeling alienated due to her diasporic location.

Contemporary critics are redefining exile and migration in terms of how these conditions are experienced by the immigrant. In *Searching for Safe Spaces: Afro-Caribbean Women Writer in Exile*, Myrian Chancy has delineated the specific conditions that force people to leave home and go in search of "home". She says:

Persecution of state terrorism; poverty enmeshed through exploitative labour practices that over work and underpay; social persecution resulting from one's dehumanization because of color, gender, sexuality, class standing . . . such indignities lead to suicide, violence, more poverty a vicious cycle of hopelessness, or finally, self-imposed exile, that is emigrant. (1)

Chancy explores the reasons for the movement of people and even the results of such movements. Different types of discrimination and exploitation may bring hopelessness or it can even cause the suicide. Those people, in the long run, choose the self-imposed exile. Maria's diasporic condition is the result of voluntary movement from her homeland. If we minutely analyse her movement to foreign land it is not her desire but the compulsion that she should take care of her parents. She belongs to the lower-middle class family and she works in a draper's shop that does not guarantee her secure future. Had she been able to get a good job paying her handsome salary she would not have left homeland. She, thus, grabs the opportunity proposed to her by the Swiss boss. Regarding the issue, Gabriel sheffer opines: "Relatively few migrants who voluntarily decide to leave their homelands because of economical and political reasons are driven to prior intentions to settle and integrate or assimilate into their host societies" (75). Sheffer opines that people voluntarily migrate to the different geography because of the economic instability or hardship in their own country. The political situation also plays the role for the people to leave their homeland. And after their arrival in the host country they have to ponder over the ways of setting there. Maria also leaves Brazil and her job in draper's shop because these do not guarantee the economic prosperity. She gets the promise of prosperous future by her boss so she takes the decision to go to Switzerland.

Maria has the realization that her position in Switzerland is minor. She, moreover, has to adjust herself in the perpetual minority. Non-European people' as diaspora in Europe find the European capitalist society's attachment to materialism. Capitalist society wants progress through work. They don't have any regard for person's dreams and success though they promise it. Through hard work first at her Rogrer's dance club, her struggle there for finding another job. She is able to earn money that is the dream of the non-European people like Maria. However, she does not feel content to do her work. She is alienated from her own labour. When she works as a prostitute she does it only for earning money, though the realm of prostitution seems so luxurious and full of excitement. She feels hurt when her boss Roger tells about the untrustworthiness and that Brazilian people are deceitful. This not only hurts the ego and selfhood of the third-World youths but also raises the question of identity: who are they in the eyes of the European and the first World nation? Radhakrishnan writes about the identity of a person in a capitalist society in this way: "It is the nature of a racist capitalist society to isolate and privatize the individual and to foster the myth of the equal and free individual unencumbered by either sense of community or a critical sense of the past" (208).

It is a myth that Western capitalist society like Switzerland has equal treatment to all immigrants there. In fact, capitalist society never treats diasporic people as free individual as Radhakrishnan has avered above. Capitalist society promises one thing but does the opposite. Her boss had gone to Braizl to take some Brazilian women as a samba dancer for his club. He, after finding Maria shows her the dreams of becoming rich overnight. To lure her, the assistant of the boss says to her:

I'd accept if I were you. He's an important impresario looking for new talent to work in Europe. If you like, I can put you in touch with some other people who accepted his invitation, got rich and are now married with children who

won't have to worry about being mugged or unemployed. Besides, Switzerland makes excellent chocolates and watches. (21)

When Maria goes to Switzerland she gets informed that she is deceived and it takes her about a year to get the ticket to her country if she becomes thrifty without spending the money she earns. Maria, however, prospers through her own exercise and the dint of her intelligence. The boss always claims his hotel to have a "family atmosphere" (41). However, the worker's there are not allowed to pursue the human fundamental need of love. If they do so they are suspended. The matter is that, capitalists always isolate human being from their sentiment and feelings and compel them to work as machine and this is even in the intensified form to the diasporic people. As they are in minority in the alien geography, they can't claim anything for their rights.

Diaspora creates multiculturalism and diasporic writing shows the characters from various cultural background, ethnicity and values. By presenting Maria as a girlfriend of a famous painter Ralf Hart, Coelho has tried to show that non-Western people are also able to be companion of European and they are trustworthy. By presenting Brazilian Maria as the girlfriend of French, Coelho has attempted to bridge the gap between two cultures as Iqbal Mahmood writes about technique of immigrant fiction in the way: "The immigrant fiction brings together people of diverse background, cultures, relations nationalities and creeds. In addition to this, these concerns are the issues of migration, nationalities, displacement, diversity and multiculturalism which are addressed in non-Western context" (6).

Coelho has also brought different characters from different cultural background. Maria belongs to non-Western but Ralf Hart belongs to Western culture. Besides, the novel consists of the characters from Islam, Yugoslavia, Kurdistan, Asia background. Coelho has aptly given the space for the flourishing of multiculturalism. Because culture can't remain

constant and static rather the culture breeds the hybridity for the world itself is growing more and more culturally hybrid. Maria, too shares her experiences with various people from various cultural background so that she becomes able to know the culture around the different parts of the world and acquaints other people about her own Brazilian culture. In this way, immigrant fiction uses such techniques to explore diasporic experience.

Diasporic subjects have the love for their homeland and their root. So, they keep everything they find that is related to their root. It is their desire to be near to their own culture. Maria also feels the desire to be near to her root. As she is in the diasporic situation she feels, "It isn't easy being far from my family and from the language in which I can express all my feeling" (49). She, after having the reasonable grasp of French language, uses it. She does it only for her adjustment in that distanced geography. However, her intense love for her own language is shown in the novel. Her love for her own culture makes her feel comfortable in such uncomfortable situation. And, thus to escape the situation she feels that "If we're in exile, we want to store every tiny memory of our root, if we're far from the person we love, everyone we pass in the street reminds us of them" (233). Diasporic people, thus, take the help of their memory to be near to their culture despite being far from it spatially.

Diasporic identity is constantly producing and reproducing themselves anew to create hybrid community that are evolving new dynamic cultures. Thus, postcolonial critics talk about diasporic subjects' feeling of being caught between two cultures-of their own homeland and that of the host country-of belonging neither rather than to both which results not only from individual psychological disorder but also from the trauma of cultural displacement caused by dispersal and its aftermath. This feeling is referred by Homi K. Bhabha and other as unhomeliness. Bhabha states that this feeling in this way: "To be unhomed is not the same as being homeless. To be unhomed is to feel not at home even in your own home because.

You are not at home in yourself: you cultural identity crisis has made you a psychological refugee" (421).

Bhabha is of the opinion that homelessness and unhomeliness differ. He believes that the identity crisis can lead a person to the condition of a psychological refugee and to the condition of unhomeliness even in his home. It means that cultural identity is very crucial aspect for diasporic people because it leads diaspora towards the sense of loss, nostalgia, rootlessness. Maria feels herself as a minor group in European location when she realises that the culture does not solely belong to her though she has been residing there for one year. Maria feels inferior culturally as well as psychologically among Europeans, it leads her toward identity crisis and nostalgic towards her homeland. Maria's state justifies the idea of Bhabha about cultural identity crisis leading oneself to psychosocially inferior position.

Diasporic subjects always favour their homelands over their host countries. At best, even diaspora that have become extensively integrated into the host countries will have only a partial loyalty to their host countries. Diasporic subjects even demonstrate either against the domination to them by the host country government or against the political or social hardships in their homelands. While Maria visits the café for her breakfast and thereafter, for strolling around the lake she, "saw a demonstration held by refugees. A woman out walking a small dog told her that they were Kurds. The Kurds came from Kurdistan, a non- existent country, now divided between Turkey and Iraq"(59-60). Though the novelist does not show the reason behind their demonstration it can be said that their demonstration is the outcome of their dissatisfaction. Regarding this issue, Gabriel Sheffer avers:

Diasporas that have become more assertive and have increased their political and economic activities, though not necessarily exclusively for the benefit of their homelands such as Moroccans in Spain, Holland, Denmark, and France,

the Algerians in France, the Koreans in the United States, Canada and Western Europe. The principal cause of their assertiveness is their need to defend against host countries' governmental and societal prejudice and intolerance, especially against cultural, social, political, and economic discrimination.

(207)

Sheffer is of the opinion that the diasporic subjects build the assertiveness in the host country and even make demonstration there. They do it not for the benefit of their homelands only but also against the different sorts of domination and discrimination they face in the host country. When diasporic feel discriminated in terms of culture, economy they raise the voice against the host country government. In the novel, though Maria does not explicitly involve herself in the demonstration made by Kurds she realizes the fact that the people like her raise the voice against discrimination even in the alien geography.

Diasporas are regarded as the estranged and estranging sharers of the national life world. Cut off from the dominant national forms of their host country diasporic subjects find solace in self-familiarizing practices. They cling to mother tongues and exotic sartorial habit, Maria's clinging to the superstition that was found in Brazilian culture, shows that she has the great affinity to the culture of her own. Moreover, Maria goes to Switzerland so as to work as a samba dancer. There she chooses to do it for it is familiar to her and it truly belongs to her. She has great tribute to her own language because it is only the language in which she can express the most intense feeling in her.

Material prosperity in the alien geography does not satisfy the diasporic subjects psychologically. They are always haunted by the sense of loss and urge to go to the root. Maria earns enough money and become able to settle anywhere if she wished. She may live with her own lover, Ralf Hart in France as well. But, deep inside her mind, she always feels

the lack of her own homeland. She, thus, at the end of the novel decides to return to her own homeland. She collects every memory during her stay in Switzerland and leaves the place. It shows that almost all diasporic people have the desire to return to the own homeland but they cannot do so as there arise different factors that do not let them leave the host country. But a few diasporic subjects like Maria can abandon everything to return to their own homeland.

Paulo Coelho's *Eleven Minutes* has powerfully expressed the experiences of diasporic people. He has shown the experiences like dislocation, sense of loss, alienation, ambivalence etc. through Maria. Thus, Coelho's *Eleven Minutes* is powerful expression of the diasporic experience of Maria.

III. Experience of Diaspora

Movement of people to foreign country lead them to experience like sense of loss, displacement, nostalgia, ambivalence, sense of nationalism. Due to their settling in new geography it is quite difficult for them to adjust there. They have to follow the host country culture for surviving there and remember their own culture for solace. In this sense, they face the crisis of their identity culturally. It is due to the influence of both host country culture and homeland culture.

Diaspora go through different experiences like dislocation, hybridity, alienation, sense of loss mimicry etc. while they go to the alien geography they feel dislocated there because of the difference of the cultures. There is the difficulty of language and they can't fully adjust there due to the different circumstances. The sense of being dislocated makes the diasporic people nostalgic and thus, they tend to create the imaginary homelands through the help of memory. As they have been to that geography they adjust themselves in the new culture and circumstances. This further leads to the development of multiculturalism and hybridity. Beside these all, the diasporic location of the people develops the sense of mimicry, the thinking that the adaptation of the superior culture makes one culturally superior in the distance geography. However, this sense of multiculturalism is a fertile zone or contact zone. This diasporic location can be the exchange of culture and the diasporic people are the mediators or the spokesperson of both local culture and the host country culture. These all are the experiences of the diasporic people and both the economic and the period that diasporic subjects spend in the host country does not affect it. Maria, as a diasporic subject also undergoes through those all experiences. She feels dislocated and later on, to survive in Switzerland she has to abide by the law and custom of the country and mould herself according to the culture there to adjust. However, the intense love for own country and

culture persists inside her. Maria attempts to be near to her culture even in the alien geography by listening to the Brazilian music, insisting on Brazilian customs.

Diaspora feel themselves in the marginalized position in the foreign land and culture as diasporas remain in the perpetual minority because minority is counted in terms of power but not in terms of numbers. Host country never treats them as equal human being and thus they feel inferior in the foreign geography. Due to unequal treatment, diaspora feel lonely and move towards nostalgia and frequently remember their homeland, people and culture. They try to search their identity and culture in foreign land. It is quite difficult for them to find it and give continuity to it. Thus, they feel unconformable. This situation makes them create the "imaginary homeland" in their mind. Moreover, if the diasporas are from the relatively inferior location in terms of economy, power and culture, they are always dominated and stereotyped.

Diasporic subjects have fluctuating identity. In other words, they have at the same time plural an partial identity. That creates the identity crisis in diasporic people. Diaspora identities are producing and producing themselves anew. Thus it can be said that Coelho has proved through the diasporic subjects like Maria that diasporic identity can be the symbol of postmodernist and postcolonial notion of multiple identities.

Paulo Coelho has powerfully presented the diasporic experience of the people from the non -Western location. He has shown what it means to be a diasporic subject from a non-European geography in the European one. He has delineated the pains, suffering and opportunities of diasporic subjects through the projection of the protagonist, Maria. He has shown how the people voluntarily move to the developed metropolitan society to equip themselves economically. He has presented Maria to show these all experiences in the novel.

Coelho has shown that diasporic people can be the mediators of cultures, as a bridge between two cultures because diasporic subjects carry within themselves their culture and interact with the host country culture. Maria makes the Swiss people know about her Brazilian culture, the existing Brazilian superstitions and is able to know the European culture. She befriends different people belonging to different cultural and economic background and knows many things about the culture and she also makes them know about her own culture. Coelho has gestured towards the possibility of transculturation in the diasporic location that, later on, results in hybridity or syncretism. Coelho has shown that no culture stands still, frozen in time, in the post colonial context. Moreover, most cultures are changed by cross-cultural contact. It is asserted that the hybridity does not consist of the stalemate between different cultures but is rather a productive, exciting, positive force in a shrinking world that is itself becoming more and more culturally hybrid. This notion encourages diasporic people to embrace the multiple and various aspects of the blended culture.

Maria, as a diasporic subject feels alienated in the alien geography. She feels alienated from her own culture. So, she has the sense of loss. As all diasporic subjects undergo thorough this experiences of alienation they need the way out of this psychological despair. To lessen the intensity of sense of loss, they rely on memory and they express their sense of unhomeliness in their writing. Maria is in the alienated situation so she expresses every experience, hardships, enjoyment in her dairy. This expression of her in her homeland language gives solace to her discomfort heart.

Coelho has shown how European people share the common mental stereotypes regarding the non-European people. Since time immemorial, European people have been posing the negative attribute to the non-European people. They consider non-European as

untrustworthy, irrational and passive. Maria's decision to quit the job from Roger's club and her demand of compensation truly blurs such stereotypes. She is able to take the decision on her own and fight for her own right. This initiative makes that hysterical Roger, a European, say Maria an untrustworthy woman. This shows how European questions us in terms of gullibility. Though these all are considered, in the present context, that these are the product of the unequal relationship in terms of power. Coelho has justified that Europeans are able to define themselves positively by positing the negative qualities to non-Western people. However, Coelho has ruptured this unilateral judgment that Europeans are only the human beings to be trusted. By presenting Maria as a girlfriend of a European, Coelho wants to send the message that the relationship builds not in terms of the notion of superiority or inferiority but the understanding among the people.

Maria becomes able to earn enough money that helps her to live a comfortable life anywhere she desires. However, she chooses to return to her own country, culture. It shows that diasporic people have the intense love towards their own culture and homeland. Even though people earn enough money it does not satisfy them psychologically. Material prosperity does not provide the psychological satisfaction and it applies to the diasporic people. Coelho has shown that the diasporic people's material prosperity should not let them forget their own homeland. It shows that Coelho has sent the message to all dispersed people from the homeland to return to their own homeland because material prosperity does not provide the satisfaction that is provided by being in the own location and culture. Maria observes the demonstration made by Kurds. Through that incident it can be said that diasporic subjects can raise the voice against any sorts of discrimination in the host country. The diasporic subjects get united in the host country and raise the voice against the mistreatment to them.

The novel is all about Maria's diasporic experience. Coelho has successfully presented the predicament of non-European diasporic subjects in the European location. The novel powerfully delineates the experience of diasporic subject, Maria to make it resemble to the experience of all diasporic subjects.

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