

## **I. *Eleven Minutes* and the Issues of Radical Feminism**

Coelho's presentation of Maria as the protagonist of the novel creates an image in the readers' mind why she has chosen the profession of prostitution thinking that sex is not an immoral act to find out her own inner light to achieve her ambition of life. This research work studies the role of Maria, the protagonist of the novel, as a prostitute where the writer of the novel also strongly supports a woman's right to have sex, to love and to be loved. To be more specific this research work highly focuses to study on how Maria tries to revolt the patriarchal social ideology towards sex and sexuality because patriarchal society provides no space to have open sex for women who are socially and sexually oppressed as well as used like the objects. For that purpose Maria uses her body openly as the space of resistance in *Eleven Minutes* to resist men's domination. It is Maria's odyssey of self discovery where she strongly challenges the patriarchal view towards sex and sexuality.

*Eleven Minutes* is a sex story of a young Brazilian village girl named Maria. Like all prostitutes, she was born as an innocent village girl. During her adolescence, she has an ambition/dream of meeting the man of her life who would be rich, handsome and intelligent, marry him, bear two children who would grow up to be famous and live in a lovely house with a sea view. This sort of innocent girl, at the age of eleven, passively falls in love for the first time with a school boy who lives in her neighborhood. She could not express her feeling of love to the boy overtly. She has missed that love when the boy's family moves away from there. At that time she regrets for the loss of her first love and realizes that such type of opportunities should not be lost again. Secondly, at the age of fifteen, she falls in love with a boy she has met in a Holy Week Procession and enjoys with him. Likewise, she falls in love third time, fourth time and so on with different men. When she turns nineteen, finishes her

secondary school and finds a job in a draper's shop, she falls in love with her own boss who loves her very much and always becomes ready to do anything to please her. After saving some money from the job, she has planned to travel to the city of her dreams, the place where film and TV stars live, i.e. Rio de Janeiro, to spend a week long holiday and gone there.

In Rio de Janeiro, Maria meets a Swiss tourist named Roger who wants her to take in Switzerland as a night club dancer. With the help of Malison, an interpreter and security officer, Roger proposes her to go to Geneva where she can earn three hundred dollars in a night as a bar dancer. Then she becomes confused. Is it better to accept the proposal or reject it? Meanwhile, she remembers her first love that she has lost. Finally she comes to the conclusion to believe Roger and accepts his proposal to go to Geneva to work as a bar dancer for the fulfillment of her future aims and ambitions. When she arrives in Geneva with mindful hopes and expectations for the success in her life, she suddenly becomes hopeless and disappointed after knowing the reality of her job there. She has been trafficked by Roger, a girl-trafficker. She has not been paid in dance bar as the agreement done with Roger. Then she becomes ready to choose the profession of prostitution when she visits an Arabian sex client who becomes ready to pay one thousand francs for a single encounter of sexual intercourse. Later she becomes a high class professional prostitute from a simple bar dancer. To earn money, she commits sexual intercourse with low class to high class clients and becomes very famous prostitute in Geneva. However, as a prostitute, she endures different kinds of pains, sufferings, ignorance and frustrations there. When she meets Ralf Hart, a young artist, she regains her spiritual virginity, falls in love with him who teaches her many more things to know her inner light and power to lead her progressive life ahead. Finally, nearly after one year, she returns to

Brazil, marries with the man of her choice, bears two daughters and leads her life like other ordinary women.

So, *Eleven Minutes* is a blended story of Maria's pains, sufferings, emotions, feelings, experiences, expectations, hopes, dreams, struggles and so on which helps us to understand the real life of a prostitute woman who revolts the patriarchal ideology of society towards sex and sexuality in search of money, name, fame and fortune she has been trapped in the profession of prostitution. If we go through the novel in depth reading, we can find out how love and sex are two different things and we can also understand how women no longer find love in sex. The plot of the story deals the journey of an innocent young girl who has shifted one mode of life to another accidentally. In the beginning she has unknowingly started the profession of prostitution but later she continues it to challenge patriarchal vision on sex and sexuality; why men want to play with women's body for their own selves. That is why her journey against the patriarchal ideology and the journey of her own discovery to find out her inner light and power goes forward.

A number of critics have analyzed Coelho's novel, *Eleven Minutes*, from various perspectives. They have analyzed the novel as- a bare sex story of the protagonist; a woman's profession of prostitution to earn money; women's right to have sex, to love and to be loved; objectification of women sexually, and radical reaction of women against the patriarchy to subvert it using female body, etc. Out of those critics Matthew J. Brucoli says that Paulo Coelho claims to commune with spirits. On *Eleven Minutes*, he writes that:

In Maria, Coelho has created a strong sensual young woman who grabs our sympathy from the first, as she suffers unrequited love as a child, learns a bit about sex as a teenager and, at 19, makes the ill-advised

decision to leave Rio on a Swiss stranger's promise of fame and fortune. Maria's trials and triumphs as she goes from restaurant dancer to high class prostitute is the highlight of the novel. (11)

Matthew J. Brucoli criticizes Coelho's novel in the sense how Maria has drifted as a famous prostitute from a simple and virgin girl. Most of the readers who read the novel give sympathy to her victimization, pain and suffering that she has experienced from Brazil to Geneva.

Joan Bridgman says that Coelho uses Maria to write a saga of sex and love making. He explores the difference between saga of sex and sex of making love. He also presents the societal codes of morality and righteous living related to sex as he states:

Apparently, Coelho's book helps people for which they seem everlastingly grateful. He makes an astute(very good) choice in having the main character in his book, which honors sex, be a prostitute.

Through Maria we are able to see some of the ugliest sides of sex. But it is through her development as a character that we are to appreciate the beauty of the act of sex. (76)

Bridgman states that apparently the content of the novel is Maria's ugliest sex story. But, intensively, it deals about how a woman is compelled to be a prostitute in her life due to the reason of male's domination. It is an artistic skill of the writer in the selection of the character and the content of the novel

Carol Singley says that Coelho had put the right words for people to easily understand and cope what he/she is reading and he maintains an unusually warm relationship with his readers:

Although Coelho's books deal with the metaphysical subjects of finding yourself and gaining spiritual insight, Coelho tells his stories like a village bard. His personal experiences make their way into his books, which he writes in Portuguese. In *Eleven Minutes*, he seems unable to resist his tendency to preach and much of the book becomes his opinion, his take on how things are and should be. (33)

Carol Singley comments that Coelho presents his own insight in his opinion where he is unable to resist his tendency to preach how the things are and should be in reality.

There is another curiosity regarding to content of the novel. How does Coelho develop this sort of interesting and curious subject matter as the plot of the novel? To release this curiosity of the readers Coelho confesses his view to GlaucoOrtolano in an interview, how the idea of *Eleven Minutes* developed:

During my lifetime, I have experienced sex in many different and contradictory ways. I was born into a conservative age, when virginity was the defining characteristic of any decent young woman. I witnessed the emergence of contraceptive pill and of antibiotics, both indispensable for the sexual revolution that would follow. I plunged enthusiastically into the hippy era, when we went to the other extreme, with free love being practiced at rock concerts. I now find myself in an age which is half-conservative, half-liberal, an age haunted by a new disease resistant to all antibiotics. (19)

In this extract GlaucoOrtolano presents Coelho's idea on the development of the content of *Eleven Minutes*. According to Coelho he has jumped into hippy era from conservative age to develop the story of the novel *Eleven Minutes*. Maria's youngster age represents the conservative the age of human civilization regarding to the sex and

sexuality and her teenage age and her profession indicates the hippy or modern age where women have freedom to have sex, to love and to be loved.

Several criticisms have been done previously on the novel *Eleven Minutes*. Some of them are mentioned above as the literature review of this research work. The above mentioned critics state how a virgin girl has chosen the profession of prostitution having sex openly with different men. This research study is somehow related with these criticisms; however, it, especially, focuses on why a woman becomes prostitute using her body openly to revolt and challenge the patriarchal ideology regarding to sex and sexuality. Women also become ready to use their body sexually to resist patriarchal ideological oppression to them. For this purpose this thesis uses radical feminism as the theoretical tool of interpretation in this research study.

Radical feminism is a perspective within feminism that calls for a radical reordering of society in which male supremacy is eliminated in all socio-cultural, economic and political contexts. Radical feminists seek to abolish patriarchy by challenging existing social roles norms and institutions, rather than through a purely political process. It studies about the challenge of traditional gender roles, opposing the sexual objectification of women, and raising public awareness about rape and violence against women. They fight for the equal role, opportunity and identity of both genders. Women can perform any role and responsibility like men in any sector. Everybody should have equal social status either one born as man or woman. So there should not be any discrimination between men and women in the world.

Different types of opinion can be found regarding to the emergence of radical feminism. Under the broad category of feminism it emerges within the second-wave

feminism movement in the 1960s after presence of Liberal and Marxism/socialist feminism. In this context Becki Ross quotes:

The ideology of radical feminism in the United States developed as a component of the women's liberation movement. It grew largely due to the influence of the civil rights movement that had gained momentum in the 1960s and many of the women who took up the cause of radical feminism had previous experience with radical protest in the struggle against racism. Chronologically, it can be seen within the context of second wave feminism that started in the early 1960s. The primary players and the pioneers of this second wave of feminism included Shulamith Firestone, Kathie Sarachild, Ti-Grace Atkinson, Carol Hanisch, and Judith Brown. (16)

Radical feminism emerged simultaneously within liberal feminists and working class feminist discussions, first in the United States, then in the United Kingdom and Australia in the form of different campaigns and movements by various organizations. They develop their revolutionary view against the vision of gender specification, i. e., man is thought to be all in all who doesn't see any existing role of women in society. They are considered as the marginalized creature. In patriarchal society women are regarded as the inferior creature. Even in twentieth and twenty first century woman cannot secure their rights, freedom and identity. They are dominated by men from home to society. As similar as the other feminist movements radical feminists have campaigned and continued to campaign for women's rights, including the right to vote, to hold public reputation, to work, to get equal pay, to own property, to get education, to have equal right within marriage, etc. Moreover, their main consideration is to promote women's bodily autonomy and to protect them from rape,

sexual harassment and domestic violence. The radical feminists believe that not only the middle class family structure is the reason of women's oppression but the whole patriarchal social structure causes it.

Typically radical feminism views patriarchy as a phenomenon which is deeper than other sources of oppression, not only the oldest and most universal form of domination in society. Radical feminists locate the root cause of women's oppression in patriarchal gender relations, not the legal systems (as in liberal feminism) or class conflict (as in socialist feminism and Marxist feminism). Radical feminists assert that patriarchal society is a formation of human civilization in which the class of men is the oppressors of the class of women. They posit that, because of patriarchy, women have come to be viewed as the "other" from the male norm due to that reason they have been systematically oppressed and marginalized. They furthermore assert that men exist as a class of benefit from the oppression of women. Radical feminists seek to abolish patriarchy, and believe that the way to do this and to deal with oppression of any kind is to address the underlying causes of it through revolution. Radical feminists believe that men use social systems and other methods of control to keep women oppressed. The main reason of women's domination/oppression is men's unequal treatment to women. Stating this fact Chris Beasley quotes:

Radical feminism terms that men learn to see women as objects for them, to be conquered as prizes, as a means to upholding men's masculinity rather than seeing women in their own right as full human being . . . Masculinity and masculine pleasure is tied to a practice and rhetoric of dominance, of sexualized dominance, such that effeminate gays and/or the penetrated are construed, along with women, as devalued objects. (200)

During the early years some radical feminists were criticized for emphasizing sex-based discrimination at the expense of race- and class-based discrimination, for being unwilling to work with men to affect change through political channels. Chris Beasley also finds out political reason of women's dominance and marginalization as stated here:

Radical feminism approaches, whether focused on women or men, are sharply political: women are a marginalised or subordinated sex class and men a dominant sex class. While the experience of marginalised womanhood may be crucial to creating a new world of gender justice in many versions of radical feminism, all variants of radical feminism agree that manhood should be thrown into the dustbin of history. (202)

Radical feminists have their own vision regarding to prostitution which is also the main reason of women dominance under patriarchy. They argue that, in most cases, prostitution is not a conscious and calculated choice of women. They say that most of the women who become prostitutes do so because they are forced by a pimp or by human trafficking, or, when it is an independent decision, it is generally the result of extreme poverty and lack of opportunity for bread and better to survive, or of any serious underlying problems, such as drug addiction or any past trauma, etc.

Catherine MacKinnon argues in this relevance that:

Radical feminists point out that women from the lowest socioeconomic classes—impoverished women, women with a low level of education, women from the most disadvantaged racial and ethnic minorities—are overrepresented in prostitution all over the world. If prostitution is a free choice, why are the women with the fewest choices the ones most often found doing it?(35)

Radical feminists see prostitution as a form of male dominance, as it puts the woman in a subordinate position, a mere instrument of sexual pleasure for the client. Similarly a large number of women involve in prostitution because of their difficult period of their lives and most of them want to leave this sort of profession. Catharine MacKinnon argues that "In prostitution, women have sex with men they would never otherwise have sex with. The money thus acts as a form of force, not as a measure of consent. It acts like physical force does in rape"(37).

This research study is divided into three chapters. The first chapter deals the introduction of the research work which includes the thesis statement, summary of the novel, literature review, point of departure, feminism as the theoretical tool of the thesis and tentative chapter division. The second chapter includes the holistic analysis of the novel/text to prove the hypothesis of the thesis as mentioned in the thesis proposal. And the third chapter concludes the research work.

## **II. Female Body as the Site of Resistance in *Eleven Minutes***

The question of feminine or female identity has always been puzzling from ancient period to present day world in patriarchal society. In any discussion of female or feminine issue/subjectivity, there are number of personal, cultural, social, political, economic, literary, psychological, etc. controversial views and shortcomings regarding to the determination of women's roles and responsibilities. In most of the patriarchal society women are restricted to perform any action/role freely in comparison to men. They have been considered as the subsidiary (other) beings of men. They are denied to use their right, power and bear responsibilities freely. No woman would want to do any type of immoral and less respectful job, like prostitution profession, to earn money for the survival purpose. Most of the women choose the path of prostitution and sexuality because of the subsidiary treatment and oppression of patriarchal ideology. Women are not given open space to survive freely in any cultural, social, political, economic, etc. contexts under patriarchal ideology. So, this research work attempts, as far as possible, to prove how women revolt/overthrow patriarchal ideology to resist their oppression as well as to secure their own identity, rights and freedom for which they become ready to use their body sexually.

The story of *Eleven Minutes* deals how Maria, the protagonist of the novel, has travelled to Geneva from Brazil and becomes a high class prostitute from a simple, beautiful, virgin and innocent Brazilian village girl drifting one event to another one in her life to revolt/challenge the patriarchal ideology. She has a great ambition to be a successful woman and spend luxurious life, however, victimized sexually by different men whom she has visited and where she has gone. So, in a diary she satirically put forwards her view towards men and their sexual behaviour to women as:

I remember everything, although not the moment when I made the decision. Oddly enough, I have no sense of guilt. I used to think of girls who went to bed with men for money as people who had no other choice, and now I see that it isn't like that. I could have said 'yes' or 'no'; no one was forcing me to accept anything. (57)

Later she returns from Geneva, marries with a man of her choice, bears two daughters and leads her life like the other women of the era leaving the profession of prostitution.

As the methodology, this research work involves radical feminism to prove the thesis statement and hypothesis critically. Radical feminism is a movement of feminism which plays a key role to subvert traditional gender based social roles and values of men and women. Radical feminists attack both traditional morality and the sexuality to eliminate male supremacy and the oppression to women caused by patriarchal ideology. To highlight this fact Ellen Willis states that:

Radical feminism began as a political movement to end male supremacy in all areas of social and economic life, and rejected the whole idea of opposing male and female natures and values as a sexist idea, a basic part of what we were fighting. (91)

Feminists claim that women were and are badly dominated for the interest of men; especially for sexual purpose. Women are thought to be an object and the other beings. They do not have equal status, right and freedom like men. That is why radical feminists struggle against the social causes of women's domination structured around patriarchal ideology to achieve women's rights, freedom, power, opportunities and status by overthrowing men's power and authority because women should be autonomous human beings with personal freedom as similar as men.

### **Radical Feminism and Sexuality in *Eleven Minutes***

Radical feminists explore women's personal as well as common experiences of sufferings, exploitation and oppression and their struggle against patriarchal ideology to secure women's rights and independence by revolting it. It discovers all forms of violence and oppression against women in all of the socio-cultural, economic, religious and political spheres of the society. Especially women were and are violated due to their body sexually which is studied, examined and experienced by radical feminists. In *Eleven Minutes* Coelho presents Terence as a sadistic man who commits sex by playing with Maria's body. He commands as "Don't move.", "Sit with your leg apart.", "Stand up." "Take off your clothes." (181/182). Again Terence strictly commands Maria to take off her all clothes and walk up and down so that he can see her whole body easily. As he commands:

Maria started to walk, obeying his commands: 'stop', 'turn to the right', 'sit down', 'open your legs'. He slapped her again and again, whether she deserved it or not, and she felt the pain and felt the humiliation - which was more intense and more potent than the pain - and she felt as if she were in another world, in which nothing existed and complete loss of any sense of ego, desire or self-will. She was very wet and very aroused, but unable to understand what was going on. (183)

Radical feminism is the organized movement which tries to overthrow patriarchal ideology to resist woman's oppression and to maintain women's wide space in all spheres of society. Being a broad movement, radical feminism involves number of phases of women's struggle and empowerment; that aims to know women's oppression in terms of race, class, gender, political and sexual contexts.

On the other hand, sexuality is another concerning subject matter to be studied under radical feminism which is considered as a complex aspect of human personality. It exists within a person which makes him or her homosexual, heterosexual, bisexual, or asexual person depending on the partners he or she is attracted to. Sexuality can be defined on the basis of sexual thoughts, desires, erotic fantasies and experiences. Anyway, sexuality is the force that empowers us to express and display strong, emotional feelings related to sex and it is also a natural stimulus for the production of human species. On the other hand, the 'thing' that attracts one person to another may not always be sexual behaviour. It would be sense of humor, personality, likeability and feeling or vision to evaluate other people. Sex or sexuality may only be a secondary consideration as Janis S. Bohanand Glenda M. Russell add that:

Beliefs about sexual categories in the modern West vary widely from the notion that sexual behavior is entirely a matter of conscious choice to the conviction that all sexual behavior is determined by heredity or environment. The same individual may, in fact, entertain with apparent equanimity (calm state of mind) contradictory ideas on the subject.

Humans of previous age were probably not, as a whole, more logical or consistent than their modern descendents. (14)

Sometimes, the part of our sexuality can be suppressed as some people have sexual desires about particular friends or associates, but do not act on or talk about those desires. One really important thing to remember is that sexual feelings, sex and relationships can be confusing, exciting, fearful and wonderful whoever we are attracted to and the way we feel about it. Some people have normal sexual desires about people of their own sex but do not explore or discuss those thoughts and

feelings with others. Those are introvert or isolated type of people who are less frank than the extrovert ones.

Sexuality is a complex concept to know. Many people may not expose their sexual role clearly because of the social norm that causes many people to repress their real sexuality. People have occasional erotic feelings for or dreams about people of the same sex but their general nature may be heterosexual. Sexuality can be defined as people's sexual interest or preference which may remain the same throughout their life for some people but would be changed as they get older for other people. However, they are feeling some sort of enjoyment during their whole life by means of it. Kate Bornstein discusses sexuality and writes about it as:

Sexuality is the word we use to describe our sexual interests and preferences. For some people these will stay the same throughout their lives, but for others they may change as they get older. It does not matter if you know what you like and stick with it or if you like to experiment, what is important is that you feel comfortable with the sex you are having, and the person or people you are sharing your sex life with.

(147)

This means the concept of sex can be defined differently based on the individual attitude and situation in which we belong to. In *Eleven Minutes* Terence and Ralf are two different mannered sex partners of Maria who commit different sexual behaviour with her. Terence is a sadistic person who gives pains and suffering to Maria. Being a business executive he pays money to Maria just for sexual pleasure. He plays the role of the sex master who commands her in warning voice what to do and what not to do while having sex. Cracking the whip in the air and slapping on her buttocks he commands her as if Maria is a small child who has just committed a great

mistake. He commands her, "You are not behaving yourself, you know. You need to be punished. How dare a girl your age contradict me? You should be on your knees before me"(181).

Ralf Hart, on the other hand, is a different and unique man whom Maria has visited in Geneva. He is a painter and artist suffering from loneliness caused by his bad relation with his wife. He has established his relation with Maria not for sexual purpose but for the relief of his loneliness. He finds pure light of love, life, achievement and success in Maria. Ralf's that sort of vision plants new sides of hopes and expectations in Maria's life that makes her return to Brazil and forward her life as the other ordinary women. In this context Ralf states Maria's personality as:

You have a light, although I don't really think you believe me yet, and think I'm just trying to seduce you with my words. Don't ask me: Why me? If I were looking for an explanation, I would say: the woman in front of me has managed to overcome suffering and to transform it into something positive, something creative, that doesn't explain everything. (126)

The occasional homosexual feelings may not affect someone's relationship with a partner of his/her opposite sex. Sometimes sexual desires and feelings are suppressed as we want ourselves to have other normal or more accepted sexual feelings. For many people, these suppressed feelings can cause pressures, become problematic and forcing to avoid any sexual encounters. Suppressed feelings can lead to anonymous sexual relations with a person of the same sex while maintaining a relationship with someone of the opposite sex. Choosing a partner with whom one shares a long-term relationship will not always be determined on the basis of sexuality. Other factors, such as, occasional meeting, our relatives, friends, economic

condition, geographical location and cultural background can also play remarkable role to establish that sort of relationship. The concept of sexuality is also varies from culture to culture and place to place as Ann Oakley talks about the biasness in the Western view to the Arab view because in:

The Western view towards sexuality is normally considered a more liberal approach, where as the Arab world's view in most of its related states is a conservative approach that is often implemented by force. Both these regions are heavily populated and both these areas have totally different views concerning gender and sexuality. (59)

According to Oakley Western people are comparatively liberal in sexual behaviour in comparison to the Arabian people. Not only this, sexual practice varies from person to person. Some people are homosexual, others are heterosexual and many others fall in between.

Sociologists have long noted the existence of gender differences in human sexual behavior. The differences include not only physiological functions, but behavioral, social, and cognitive elements. Sexuality can be dealt as a particular way of looking at or talking about sex created by a particular kind of society during a particular historical era. There is the sexual instinct, there is lust, there is sin or crime or insanity, but there may not be sexuality in the sense of someone's personal blend of drive and desire. Henry Abelove advocates that with the rise of feminism the feminists analyse sex as the idea of sexuality associated with sexual desire. It tends to blend very different kinds of preference and behavior as it is:

An important thing to remember that sexuality can change and that we do not have to decide who we are going to be attracted to and stick to it. Sexuality is not fixed and who we are attracted to can change over

time, or even week to week. In fact, who we find ourselves attracted to is not really something we can choose or control. (52)

So the biological and social notions of sexuality are two different concepts. Biologically the concept of sexuality is concerned with sex but socially, it is defined differently on the basis of social norms and individual ideology.

Sigmund Freud defines sexuality in its particular modern way as a term of describing not only the sexual drive but the direction which it takes in a particular individual. In his clinical work during the ending years of the nineteenth century, he notices how significant role the sexuality plays in the mental conflicts of his patients. So it is invariably one of the poles of any symptom-generating conflict to the patients. In *The Interpretation of Dreams* (1900), he evokes the importance of childhood sexuality solely in connection with neurotics, but beginning with the first edition of the *Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality* (1905) he asserts its presence and its essential role in all children. Freud finds out a new reality that sexual satisfaction is most necessary for human development. He adds that human beings fulfill their sexual satisfaction by different types of sexual activities like observation, touching, talking, masturbating, and having sexual intercourse, etc. as per the age and situation. It is necessary from birth to death for human development according to Freud. So, he takes the human sexuality in a broadened sense that includes childhood and perverse/rudeness. Concerning to the above view, David O. Cauldwell says that:

Throughout the nineteenth century, in other words, sexual preference for a person of one's own sex was not clearly distinguished from other sorts of non-conformity to one's culturally defined sex role: Deviant object-choice was viewed as merely one of a number of pathological

symptoms exhibited by those who reversed or inverted their proper sex roles by adopting a masculine or a feminine style at variance. (498)

Michel Foucault has drawn our attention to the rise of a particular way of looking at and defining sexual matters. Foucault has famously described sexuality, in *A History of Sexuality* (1976), as a system of discourses that came into existence during the nineteenth century created by the desire to regulate sex and to define and prohibit certain kinds of behavior. Sexuality, in the sense of a personal and idiosyncratic amalgam of drive and direction, central to a person's individuality, is generated out of a perception of sex as a problem, or a series of problems. He has forced us to think differently about existing immature concepts of what sexuality is and does. Foucault feels that, it is not a force of nature which is repressed during the course of the nineteenth century but it is a liberal concept as cited here:

There can be no possible exercise of power without a certain economy of discourse of truth which operates through and on the basis of this association. We are subjected to the production of truth through power and we cannot exercise power except through the production of truth. In the end, we are judged, condemned, classified, determined in our undertakings, destined to a certain mode of living and dying as a function of the true discourse which are the bearers of the specific effects of power. (35)

Cultures construct difference in gender. It is important to understand gender as different from sexuality. It concerns physical and biological differences that distinguish males from females. These social constructions attach themselves to behaviours, expectations, roles, representations and sometimes to values and beliefs that are specific to either men or women.

Sometimes sex can be defined as the phenomenon of the biological difference between men and women and gender as the manner in which culture defines and constrains these differences. Feminine/masculine, male/female, women/men, boy/girl, terms of sexual and gender division like these affect the way we think and talk about ourselves and each other. Instead of biology, Arno Karlen writes that socially agreed and constructed conduct constitute the area of gender difference:

Before the scientific construction of sexuality as a positive, distinct, and constitutive feature of individual human beings – an autonomous system within the physiological and psychological economy of the human organism – a person's sexual acts could be individually evaluated and categorized, but there was no conceptual apparatus available for identifying a person's fixed and determinate sexual orientation. (58)

As discussed above, Sexuality is a broad term to define the roles played by males and females. There is no sharp distinction to be mentioned between them as they sometimes may merge together and coexist. This notion of gender and sexuality is relevant here to mention in this research study because it is primarily based on this issue. Stating this issue I would like to verify how the women were or are violated/oppressed due to the reason of sex and sexuality under the patriarchal ideology and how they try to revolt it to secure their identity in that sort of socio-cultural structure even though they need to use their body to resist it.

### **Space of Women's Body in *Eleven Minutes***

Sexually women were and are used as the physical things/objects by men under the patriarchal socio-cultural structure from past to present. Typically women's body is the main focal point for men from the perspective of sex and sexuality. This sort of fact can be found everywhere in male-dominated society in the world. Most of the men gaze women's body to fulfill their sexual satisfaction indirectly. Many teenagers and adults develop their relation with women for the bodily sexual satisfaction rather than the emotional love and other purposes.

Men become ready to pay large amount of money for bodily sexual pleasure in the prostitution world but not for emotional love. This sort of fact is vividly mentioned by the writer in *Eleven Minutes*. For example, Terence, a business executive, is a character of the novel who visits Maria, pays money for sexual pleasure who commits sex in sadistic manner. He doesn't have any concern with Maria's pain and suffering. He punishes her by commanding to do this and to do that as cited here:

He violently forced her legs apart although she knew this violence would not actually harm her- and tied each leg to one corner of bed. Now that her wrists were handcuffed behind her, her legs splayed, her mouth gagged. Couldn't he see that she was ready, that she wanted to serve him, that she was his slave, his creature, his object and would do anything he ordered her to do? (184)

As cited above, women are treated as the slaves, creatures, physical objects and the other beings by men under the patriarchal society. Nowhere women are safe in each and every step of their whole life. They are sexually victimized by their male family members, relatives, friends, boss, teachers, leaders, social activists and others.

For example Maria is sexually victimized by her different boyfriends, boss and sex clients. Even her boss who provides her job wants to have sexual pleasure indirectly. For that purpose he communicates with Maria as "Don't call me sir. I can give you a house, a family, some money for your parents" (18). While stating this extract, there is obvious flame of sex in his intention that has not been fulfilled till Maria has left the job at his shop because Maria has always maintained appropriate distance with him.

Being the representative member of the sexually victimized woman, Maria reacts radically to the patriarchal vision of men. She endures her physical, mental, emotional and psychological pain and suffering and uses those pain and suffering as the foundations to overthrow patriarchal ideology towards women to secure women's rights, freedom and identity as Ralf says to Maria:

Does a soldier go to war in order to kill the enemy? No, in order to die for his country. Does a wife want to show her husband how happy she is? No she suffers in order to make him happy. Does the husband go to work thinking he will find personal fulfillment there? No, he is giving his sweat and tears for the good of the family. And it goes on: sons give up their dreams to please their parents, parents give up their lives in order to please their children; pain and suffering are used to justify the one thing that should bring only joy: love. (203)

As cited above we need to face pain and suffering for the heavenly salvation of our life. Pain and suffering are the tools to achieve joy, love or any great achievement in our life as Maria has achieved her ambition and becomes the representative model of women in the world by her own struggle and effort from Brazil to Geneva.

Even in this twentieth and twenty first century women are dominated bodily, particularly due to the reason of sex and sexuality. There is no clear cut space for

women by means of their body. That is why the radical women or radical feminists like the protagonist of the novel, Maria, try to overthrow the patriarchal ideology to secure their salvation like identity, rights and freedom even if they have to face physical, mental, psychological and emotional pain and suffering in their life.

### **Maria's Role as Prostitute to Overthrow Patriarchal Ideology**

Prostitution has a long history that begins from ancient period of human civilization. The historical record can be found since the classical writings like in Egyptian hieroglyphs, in Sumerian Writings, in the Old and New Testament. But the profession of prostitution only started later since sixth century BC as it is mentioned in *Eleven Minutes*:

Prostitutes appear in classical texts, in Egyptian hieroglyphs, in Sumerian Writings, in the Old and New Testament. But the profession only started to become organized in the sixth century BC, when a Greek legislator, Solon, set up state- controlled brothels and began imposing taxes on "the skin trade". (205)

Coelho mentions that prostitution has two histories or two types; the first one is done for the survival purpose by selling body and the second one is done for adventurous purpose to chase one's misfortune. The second historical aspect is totally applied in this thesis to deal Maria's odyssey of self discovery.

Men have debated with one another in proclaiming that love is a woman's supreme/great achievement. A woman who loves a man and to be loved by man becomes a perfect woman. A woman gets some sort of status only when she makes her life a continuous offering some sort of services to man as the service provider in patriarchal society. This has been taught to Maria when she was young. So she has dreamt of her handsome boyfriend, husband, two children and lots of property as the

part of her luxurious life. This sort of ambitious imagination has taught/guided her the importance of the art of cultivating desire and holding it back. She adds, “And then, our bodies learn to speak the language of the soul, known as sex, and that is what I can give to the man who gave me back my soul” (141).

In the beginning of the novel, Maria is a young girl living in Brazil's interior. Her girlhood experiments with romance convince her that love is a delusion, or at least it is not for her. In Brazil, Maria suffers from her first unresponded love and determines that she will never bare her heart again. Later, as she grows teenager, she falls in love with one person to another that leads her towards the path of prostitution. After traveling to Geneva she becomes a professional prostitute and discovers that it takes only eleven minutes on average to complete the sexual act although many people are fully crazy with it to have sexual pleasure in their life. Maria has chosen profession of prostitution as she says, “I can choose either to be a victim of the world or an adventurer in search of treasure. It's all a question of how I view my life” (39). As it is cited here Maria has chosen the profession of prostitution first by men's victimization and later by an adventure in search of treasure, i. e., to earn large amount of money within short period of time. Joan Bridgman says that Coelho has chosen Maria to write a saga (story) of sex and love making, to explore the difference between sex and love making and to raise questions regarding to the various aspects of societal codes of morality and righteous living as quoted here:

Apparently, *Coelho's* book helps people for which they seem everlastingly grateful. He makes an astute (very good) choice in having the main character in his book, which epitomizes/highlights sex. With the help of Maria we are able to see some of the ugliest sides of sex.

But it is through her development as a character that we are able to appreciate the beauty of the act of sex. (76)

Maria has chosen the path of prostitution in search of both adventure and money. She learns about men and sexuality from her various clients. She mentions it in various points in the book, "I have discovered the reason why a man pays for a woman: he wants to be happy" (64) or that, "sex has come to be used as some kind of a drug: in order to escape reality, to forget about problems, to relax. And like all drugs, this is a harmful and destructive practice" (175). She explores her sadistic sexual enjoyment with one of her client, Terence, and writes:

When I had nothing to lose, I had everything. When I stopped being who I am, I found myself. When I experienced humiliation and total submission, I was free. I don't know if I'm ill, if it was all a dream, or if it only happens once. I know that I can perfectly well live without it, but I would like to do it again, to repeat the experience, to go still further. (191)

As she continues her profession the boredom with sex and sexuality grows because she finds that the profession of prostitution is not like the other professions. The beginners earn less than the experienced ones in other professions. Conversely, the beginners earn more than the experienced ones in the profession of prostitution. The more a prostitute becomes experienced in her profession the more she has been treated as the second hand things and sent in the cheaper restaurants (bars). One of Maria's friends says, "prostitution is not like other businesses: beginners earn more and the more experienced earn less. Always pretend you're a beginner" (78). Feeling this sort of boredom Maria satirically writes on her diary, "I need to write about love. I need to think and think and write and write about love - otherwise, my soul won't

survive” (76). However, later she finds real and enlightened love with a painter named Ralf Hart when she has visited him. She finds sacred nature of sex, i. e., sex, purely, based on love with him.

Maria's transformation into a high profiled prostitute and her unique perspective/vision forms the soul of *Eleven Minutes*. Her ambition and curiosity distinguish her from not only her colleagues but from everyone else in Geneva. Through all such roles, Maria seems to catch her continuously changing and dissatisfied subjectivities. However her essential subjectivity remains unchanged as well as unfulfilled. At her professional journey, Maria begins prostitution accidentally with an Arabian, who pays her one thousand Francs for one night as:

She went to the Arab's hotel, drank champagne, got herself almost completely drunk, opened her legs, waited for him to have an orgasm (it didn't even occur to her to pretend to have one too), washed herself in the marble bathroom, picked up the money, and allowed herself the luxury of a taxi home. She fell into bed and slept dreamlessly all night.

(57)

Sex is a powerful drug. The more we have, the more we need. Maria finds the same in **sadomasochism** (sexual enjoyment with pain and suffering) with a selected client, Terence. Maria follows her dreams in Europe but soon finds that she is not the girl with great ideas. Loneliness and frustration inevitably become her main modes of existence. When an Arab man offers her a thousand francs to have sex with her, she makes a decision to have sex for money and doesn't turn back.

Maria becomes a regular prostitute at the Copacabana club and starts saving all over again. From her first experience of sex, she decides it does not do anything for her. If it does nothing for her, there is no pleasure, then why not to do it for

money. After all, it only involves opening her legs, and working out of the Copacabana in Geneva where she makes 300 Swiss francs per client, three clients a night. In less than a year, she has saved 60,000 francs in her bank account. Brian Phillips says that Maria's story talks about the power of love because:

The beauty of the book lies in the way Paulo Coelho has differentiated 'sex' from 'love making'. Virginity is definitely an overrated virtue and that is what has been made abundantly (very) clear through this book. A prostitute may sleep around with several people, but she's the one who truly knows what making love is all about because after having experienced so many men, there is only one man who makes her realize her divine self. (235)

After long experience of prostitution, Maria has come to understand that sex is some kind of drug to take, relaxes and like all drugs; this is a harmful and destructive practice in nature. In dealing with all her executive clients, Maria, sometimes pretends as an innocent girl, who gazes admiringly at the man, pretending to be impressed by his tales of power and glory. On the other hand, her role as a prostitute forces her to act as the understanding mother, who looks after her clients to advise them, the ones who listen to her with full comprehension.

The men, she has met since she arrives in Geneva, always do anything confidently as if they are in perfect control of the world and of their own lives. But Maria could see in their eyes that they are afraid of their wife, the feeling of pain that they might not be able to get an erection even to the ordinary prostitute whom they are paying for her services. If they go to a shop and don't like the shoes they have bought, they will be quite prepared to go back, receipt in hand and demand a refund. But when they are paying for some female company, if they don't manage to get an erection,

they will be too ashamed to go back to the same club again because they will assume that all the other women there will know them. In this context Maria expresses her feelings that:

I'm the one who should feel ashamed for being unable to arouse them, but, no, they always blame themselves. They all dream of someone who will come along and see in them a real woman – companion, lover, friend. But they all know, from the very first moment of each new encounter, that this simply isn't going to happen. (76)

To avoid such embarrassments, Maria always tries to put men at their ease, and if someone seems drinking wine or more fragile than usual, she avoids sexual intercourse and concentrate them on touching and masturbating, which always seems to please them immensely. This seemed absurd since they can perfectly well masturbate on their own. She has to make sure that they don't feel ashamed. These men, so powerful and arrogant at work, constantly having to deal with employees, customers, suppliers, prejudices, secrets, fear and oppression, ended their day in a nightclub and they don't mind spending three hundred and fifty Swiss francs to stop being themselves for a night.

Maria has always been used by all the males she love. They use her to get physical pleasure and then drop her down like rubbish thing. She can't do anything to challenge them. Although, later, she has decided to become a prostitute to revolt the patriarchal vision against women's use as the object. Maria is a unique case of crossing the thresholds of varying subjectivities in order to attain the ultimate goal of life. Being a prostitute she involves innumerable number of physical as well mental pain and suffering but she consistently goes ahead to achieve her goal. In serving her clients, she exercises a mechanical regularity to satisfy their sexual desire. Despite

such encounters, Maria very well knew, that, “Desire is not what you see, but what you imagine” (162). As she has mentioned in her diary that:

Each day I choose the truth by which I try to live. I try to be practical, efficient, professional. But I would like to be able always to choose desire as my companion. Not out of obligation, not to lessen my loneliness but because, it is good, yes, very good. It is an emotion chosen by my soul, and it is so intense that it can infect everything and everyone around me. (167)

Generally a woman thinks that her sexual gratification is less important than her husband's one. She submits herself to gratify her husband. Thus, in any case, one's sexual desire automatically remains under the control of woman. Maria's beauty is a magnet that draws men towards her instantly. Being a high profile prostitute, Maria knew that, “having sex is about eleven minutes” (88), but her own innate subjectivity never “revolved around something that only took eleven minutes” (88). In her heart of hearts, she still is innocence preserve and personify and like every other good woman felt that really important meetings are planned by the souls long before the bodies see each other. She always feels that what she needs is not a cultural passage, but an emotional one to enable her to become the woman, that she wants.

Maria grows up in a small town in the interior of Brazil where folklore, superstitions, and traditional roles for women are woven into the culture. Although she is good at school and always tries to better her situation by reading books, her only goal is to fall in love, marry and raise a family. In Maria, the author has created a strong, sensual young woman who grabs our sympathy from the first, as she suffers unrequited love as a child, learns a bit about sex as a teenager and at 19, makes the ill-advised decision to leave Rio de Janeiro on a Swiss stranger's promise of name, fame

and fortune. Her simple mother's advice to her young, curious daughter and who is unknown to the possible dangers compels her to travel to Geneva that causes her to be a prostitute. She has once suggested Maria that:

My dear, it's better to be unhappy with a rich man more than happy with a poor man, and over there you'll have far more chances of becoming an unhappy rich woman. Besides, if it doesn't work out, you can just get on the bus and come home. If you can go there, you can always come back. I didn't love your father at first, but money buys everything, even true love. (32)

*Eleven Minutes* is a novel about sex and sexuality where the title refers to the duration of time to commit the sexual act. Maria, as a prostitute, presents sex as a beautiful lesson to be mastered as one gains experience. Like other women she was born as an innocent girl in interior village in Brazil. She starts her journey as an innocent and virgin girl to meet her great ambition of her life and moves in Geneva and becomes a high class prostitute.

Maria's entrance in prostitution is probably pretty typical, she is not the common sex worker as we know her character in the novel. She visits the library regularly. She reads and takes notes on matters of psychiatry, love, sex and farm management. She reads to fulfill physical and mental needs of her clients. She saves her money and she has done four adventures in Geneva; becomes a bar dancer, learns French, works as a prostitute and hopelessly falls in love. She uses her time properly until her return home to Brazil. Maria honors to have sex and to be a prostitute. Apparently Maria presents some of the ugliest sides of sex but it is appreciable because she has chosen and continued this side of sexual act to overthrow the

patriarchal ideology which has been rooted since the traditional age of human civilization in patriarchal society.

As an innocent girl Maria herself doesn't know why she has chosen prostitution. She might have chosen it feeling that she has nothing to lose after sexually victimized by different men. Or to earn money easily she has chosen this profession. If the reason is to earn money, then it would not be a good idea. She may have other alternative ways for it. It is not true. She can change the track of her life any time by quitting the profession of prostitution because she knows it clearly why she has been doing this profession. Moreover, she is the woman of her own consciousness. Everyone in her life has shown her what pain is that makes her a stronger woman, who knows how to separate personal and professional life. Things change in Maria's life when she meets a young painter, Ralf, who sees her as the woman having inner light within her; none of the previous men has seen it. And now she has two options of life to choose, either to continue the dark path of prostitution, or to leave it all behind, and start a new life. Of course she has chosen the second one and leads her happy married life like other common women of the era.

### **Maria's Odyssey of Self Discovery to Search Her Inner Light**

*Eleven Minutes* is the story of Maria, an innocent, virgin, Brazilian village girl. Her innocent notions of love leave her heartbroken when she unknowingly becomes prostitute. After sexually victimized by men she begins to believe in the idea that love is a terrible thing that will make a woman sufferer as it is mentioned by the writer "After long time, she came to the conclusion that men brought only pain, frustration, suffering and a sense of time dragging" (13). A chance of meeting with Roger in Rio de Janeiro takes her to Geneva where she thinks she will be wealthy and famous. Unfortunately the innocent young Brazilian girl has to choose the profession of

prostitution. Meanwhile, in Geneva, Maria develops a personal career with sex. Later her meeting with Ralf Hart leads her towards the adventurous journey of self discovery. In the beginning of the novel, Maria is an innocent girl who:

Dreamed of meeting the man of her life (rich, handsome and intelligent), of getting married (in a wedding dress), having two children (who would grow up to be famous) and living in a lovely house (with a sea-view). . . . She was always hoping that one day, without warning, her Prince Charming would arrive, sweep her off her feet and take her away with him so that they could conquer the world together. (1)

Maria does not regret with her profession of prostitution, but it does not give her the time of celebrating her aims. Her story, more than being a fable of an innocent girl turns to whore/prostitute, is mysterious journey of a young girl who drifts herself into a woman. This transition involves the strange realities of her life and her choices. In this journey, she has options to choose, i. e., either to pursue a path of physical pleasure or to discover the possibility of love with physical relationship. It is Ralf Hart, who teaches her the real meaning of being a woman and who sets her culturally free by acknowledging the desire of a woman. He makes her attain an orgasm, both emotional and sexual.

Indulgence with sex, Maria becomes able to choose a radical way of reclaiming her lost identity. While experiencing the “mystery and delight” (150) from sadistic sexual pleasure with Terence, Maria attempts to cross the boundary of bare prostitution to find her inner light. Unlike her emotional past hurt, where she has offered unwilling gifts to men, she is offering herself up as a sacrifice. This feeling within her soul introduces her to the latent woman within her who, “wants to have all

the joy, passion and adventure” (153) that life has to offer something. Apart from her desire, her sadistic sexual experience with Terence is not a way of accepting her passivity in the line of heterosexual relations. Her relationship with Terence is political in which she also looked for a momentary self elevation. He says:

You will be punished because you are useless, because you don't know the rules and because you know nothing about sex, life or love. Do you know why I am doing this? Because there is no greater pleasure than that of initiating someone into an unknown world. Taking someone's virginity - the virginity not of their body, but of their soul, you understand. (149)

Maria is a prostitute and a prostitute in the normal culture can be regarded as an other being. Maria believes that even if the sexual act is pleasurable, women may sometimes be offended by a too obvious effort to give their pleasure due to the acknowledged differences in different cultures. It is a feeling which presupposes the presence of desire due to the acknowledgement of the other people's difference. In this regard, where Maria sits with Ralf Hart, in front of the fireplace, sipping wine and having the following conversation, where Maria opines:

As for sex, I don't think I can teach you anything. I am nearly twenty three, you're about six years older, but I know you've lived life very intensely. I know men who pay me to do what they want, not what I want. I've done everything a man could dream of doing with one, two, even three women at the same time. And I don't think I learned very much. I want you however you want to be wanted. (128)

Hart tells Maria about the ritual of sacred prostitution, the importance of pain in human lives and cultural stigmas attached to the open acknowledgement of feminine

desire. Ralf “made her understand that the search for happiness is more important than the need for pain” (211). She feels as wet as she has with Terence’s whip between her legs, when Hart touches her naked breasts, only to start an unsatisfying desire of sex that never intended to finish her off. Then, she knows that, “she wasn’t dead to sex. That man had managed to rescue her. It was good to be alive.” (222). That is, where the difference between physicality and emotionality described itself and Maria falls in love with Ralf.

Personally, she never wants a commitment from Ralf, because, she is not looking for a victory, but a, “kind of utter surrender by which a person offers his or her heart and asks for nothing in return” (155). Later, of course, she gets everything, the completion of her dream, her subjectivity and her identity. This desire is exactly what Maria feels for the first time with Ralf Hart, when she quickly and carefully writes in her diary:

Anyone who is observant, who discovers the person they have always dreamed of, knows that sexual energy comes into play before sex even takes place. The greatest pleasure isn’t sex, but the passion with which it is practiced. When the passion is intense, then sex joins in to complete the dance, but it is never the principal aim. (166)

Ralf Hart’s search within Maria is not for her body but it is for her soul. That is why, towards the end of the novel, they make love. The detail written in Maria’s diary appears to have been penned (**written**) by a lost soul, “when we initiated that joint search for the two lost souls, the two missing fragments needed to complete the Universe” (262). The sexual act multiples Maria’s orgasms as she says, “none of this absolutely none of this was a LIE” (263). It’s the great pleasure in her life till now. She has always faked her pleasure, her orgasmic ecstasy, to ensure a faithful sex client

and to ensure that money never stops coming in. She is unmindful of her own subjectivity which for the first time she feels satisfied when Hart enlightens her body, her soul and her life.

Maria feels this new self-respect because her lover (Ralf) knows about her desire and takes care to fulfill it, without ever her telling him so. If, in experiencing sadistic sexual pleasure with Terence, she has felt sad because of the presence of her ego in a sad and degraded condition however she develops some sense of her own discovery. A woman feels better after the shocked experience and can manage cultural taboos, life circumstances and even her own inner emotional behaviours. This force has been found in Maria's strong wishes to forge romantic relationships since her teenage years. And the climax of desire in a woman's body has a lot to do with psychic factors. Ralf Hart feels intensely about sex, because, for him, sex was beyond the body. As Maria writes:

If you live your life intensely, you experience pleasure all the time and don't feel the need for sex. When you have sex, it's out of a sense of abundance, because the glass of wine is so full that it overflows naturally, because it is inevitable, because you're responding to the call of life, because at that moment and only at that moment you have allowed yourself to lose control. (176)

As a prostitute, she has not been in control who meets hundreds of men, Ralf hart, Terence and others. However, she has, for the first time ever, let go of her emotions and hence experiences a pleasure with Ralf Hart. Maria's ability to give herself orgasms and to show her lovers how to please them has been one of the foundation of a new self respect, autonomy and discovery to her personally.

Women in different culture do not know what womanhood means because all the markers to indicate it are different cross culturally. For Maria, this point comes in her life, when she feels that she can trust Hart. For him, the point has come when he has made up his mind to win Maria's trust (her "inner light"). If Ralf is ready to learn about Maria's sexuality and the timing of her body, he wants her to learn about his body as well. Maria is, "pleased that the conversation had shifted into being a discussion" (258). Sex, then, for both of them means a celebration of the divinity of selflessness and in such a situation pleasure is guaranteed as Maria states the following extract:

And I came at the same moment he came. It wasn't eleven minutes, it was an eternity, it was as if we had both left our bodies and were walking joyfully through the gardens of paradise in understanding and friendship. I don't know how long it lasted, but everything seemed to be silent, at prayer, as if the universe and life had ceased to exist and become transformed into something sacred, nameless and timeless.

(264)

In the end of the novel, Maria emerges as a newly born woman. She lives in the selfless expression of this very pure desire that transforms her from a prostitute into a wife integrating with bonds in her community. Unlike, the other encounters, it becomes possible by the accidental and emotional contact with Hart when Maria feels her sexual self discovery and the existence of her inner light. She leaves hell, i.e., prostitution and achieves the paradise, i. e., ordinary life of women. In such a way Maria purifies her soul; leaves the profession of prostitution; returns to her country; gets marry; bears two children(daughters) and leads her life progressively forward like the other common women of the era as she has planned the ambition of her life.

All of this becomes possible due to the accidental and emotional meeting with Ralf Hart who teaches Maria to discover her inner light to rehabilitate her normal life leaving the profession of prostitution. With this evidence Maria, the protagonist of the novel, can be regarded as the representative of thousands women in the world who achieve pearl (great success to overthrow patriarchal ideology) from the ocean like odyssey of pain and suffering and oppression in life.

### III. Assertion of Female Self

After the comprehensive analysis and interpretation of Paulo Coelho's novel *Eleven Minutes* from radical feminism perspective the researcher comes to the conclusion that in this age of twentieth and twenty first century women radically attempt to overthrow the existing patriarchal social ideology regarding women's oppression, imposed to them since the history, even though they have to use their body sexually being prostitutes. It is one of the themes of the novel in which the researcher is very keen on to study and find out the reality. Women are regarded as the inferior beings by men. They have been socially, culturally, economically, sexually and politically oppressed. **That is why women radically become ready to use their body sexually to resist the men's oppression against them as well as to achieve their freedom, right and the self.**

To prove the raised issue of the research work radical feminism is used as the theoretical tool of analysis and interpretation. It is developed by radical women activists as a movement to demolish/subvert traditional gender based roles and values of men and women, especially to overthrow the patriarchal oppression to women caused by sex and sexuality to secure their rights, identity and freedom. Radical feminists opine that prostitution is not the choice of women. This profession is chosen by women due to the reason of male domination and treatment to women. So, radical feminists have done prominent struggle against patriarchy to make women as the autonomous human beings with personal freedom resisting the objectification of women. This vary fact is totally applied in *Eleven Minutes* as the theoretical tool of interpreting the raised issue of research.

Apparently the plot of the novel seems the ugliest sex story of Maria, the protagonist of the novel, who was born as an innocent Brazilian village girl having the

ambition of earning lots of money, marry the man of her choice, bear two children and spend luxurious life. Unfortunately, she has been sexually used by one man to another and drifted to Geneva from Brazil where she becomes professional prostitute. But, when we reach to the heart of the novel as the readers and critics, we can find the flesh of the novel, i. e., women's pain, suffering, oppression, frustration and victimization under the patriarchal ideology caused by male domination.

Maria meets two types of male characters in her adventurous journey of self discovery. Some of them, on the one hand, come to her contact and spend money to have sexual gratification. The others, on the other hand, come to her contact to release their pain, suffering and other emotional and mental problems to be happy themselves who also help her to be happy in her life by searching her inner light and power in her ocean like pain and suffering caused by patriarchal ideology. The former types of characters like Terence, her boyfriends, lovers boss and sex clients, etc., are the representatives of women's oppression who want to use women as the sex toy to fulfill their sexual gratification. And the later ones like Ralf Hart are the representatives of women's facilitation who help them to know their inner light and power to lead their life in the way of progress even though they are indulging in pain and suffering. This is one example which shows that not all the men are the reason of women's oppression in patriarchal ideology but some of them also help the women to overthrow/subvert the patriarchal ideology of women's oppression imposed them.

Patriarchal society is guided by male's domination to women where men's vision to look women as the inferior beings in their societal roles is totally biased treatment to women. As it is dealt in the plot of the novel Maria is sexually used by many men having the relation as the boyfriends, lovers, boss and sex clients. She has been drifted/trafficked to Geneva from Brazil for the same purpose. This is the vision

of men to look women in patriarchy. So Maria radically goes against this sort of oppression and inhuman like treatment of men to demolish the strong and well standing patriarchal wall in front of women as the barrier to secure their rights, freedom and identity. She remarkably becomes successful in this adventurous journey. With this evidence Maria, the protagonist of the novel, can be regarded as the representative of thousands women in the world who achieve pearl from the ocean like odyssey of pain and suffering in their life.

So, the hypothesis of the research work, i. e., to prove how women use their body to resist men's oppression as well as to achieve their right, freedom and the self is proved with the help of above mentioned analysis and interpretation.

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