

I. Introduction

1. Biography of the author Paulo Coelho

Paulo Coelho was born on 24 August, 1947 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. He is the best known author of Brazil whose works have been translated into fifty six different languages throughout the world. *The Alchemist* is his most famous novel that brought him worldwide fame as well as it turns him into a cult hero. After the publication of this novel, Coelho is recognized as an international best-selling author. Basically he is known for his powerful story telling technique along with the profound spiritual insights that he blends in his fiction. He has owned numerous literary prizes for his literary contribution to enrich the field of literature. In 1999, this intelligent author received a Crystal Award for his Artistic Achievement at the Davos Economic Forum Conference.

Paulo Coelho, unlike his varied and unusual protagonists, has followed a dream in a quest for fulfillment. According to his own dream to become a writer, he met with frustration throughout much of his early adult life. Because his engineer father, unlike other ordinary father, wants his son to follow the footsteps of his own. His father wants him to become a professional lawyer that has both money and position in the society. But Coelho always dreamt of an artistic career. The profession of a writer was taken as a bad job during that time in Brazil. Then he sought his career by working at various professions. Some of them are materially rewarding but they do not give him spiritual fulfillment. He knew that he could gain spiritual fulfillment only through his writing. When he rebelled expressing, his intention to become a writer, his parents had him committed to treat him to a psychiatric hospital. His true experience in the psychiatric hospital has some resemblance with the protagonist of

his novel *Veronika Decides to Die*. The novel touches on the theme of madness and suicide. The protagonist, Veronika, being frustrated with boredom and emptiness of life has committed suicide. Then she is admitted to mental hospital. In hospital she goes through different experiences that make her to realize the importance of life.

According to the critic, Juan Arias, that “Coelho was always a non-conformist, a seeker after the new, leading him to try everything good and everything bad that appeared along the way(ix).” In this context, in 1970, after deciding that law school was not for him, he left his home. Then he began to work in theatre which is his new dream and made enough money as an actor. When Coelho experience his crisis of faith, he went off in search of new spiritual experience. With the money that Coelho collected from the theatre, he began his journey through much of Latin America following the footsteps of Carlos Castaneda, North Africa, Mexico, and Europe. Life for Coelho is a kind of experiment. So he had also joined counter cultural revolution experimenting with drugs, black magic and also got involved in Brazil’s bohemian art as well as music. Moreover, he began a successful career as a popular song writer (lyricist). Coelho was a follower of Marx, Engels, and Che Guevara when the guerrilla and hippy movement took place in 1968. On the other hand he has also joined anti-capitalist organization called the alternative society. This attracted the attention of the Brazil military dictatorship. So, he was imprisoned for a short time by the military dictatorship then ruling in Brazil. In imprisonment, he went through hardships and tortures that changed his life. But his passion for travel, in search of his personal mission, was still undiminished. Therefore Coelho with his wife set out to travel the world for six months until, in Germany; he underwent a profound and intense spiritual experience in a concentration camp. This spiritual experience

brought change in his life by bringing back his faith in Catholic beliefs of his parents.

In 1980, he had experienced one of the most defining moments of his life. In this moment, he walked more than five hundred mile Road of Santiago de Compostela in north western Spain, in the footsteps of pilgrims of Middle Ages, which is his ancient wisdom of spiritual quest. Through this travelling, Paulo Coelho achieved self-awareness and spiritual awakening. His experience of pilgrimage along with self-awareness and spiritual awakening are later described in his spiritual novel *The pilgrimage* when it was published in 1987. Regarding the idea of spiritual quest, Coelho explains in one of his interviews with the critic, Juan Arias, that “you start in darkness not knowing what you’ll find, although wanting to find clues to meet up with yourself, with your destiny(7).” Life is journey itself. We start our journey in darkness of unfamiliar world without knowing whether we will find what we destined or not, though there are some clues. The important thing to get spiritual quest is to create a larger empty space within oneself by getting rid of superfluous thing. But it is necessary to live the essential life and always be on the way so that one can recognize the clues on the way which will show your destiny.

Writing was still Coelho’s passion. So he published his second novel, *The Alchemist*, in 1988 when he was 38 years old. It explores the theme that following your dream is like learning a foreign language. Similarly Coelho published his third novel, *Brida*, in 1990 which proved successful for his artistic career. Since then, he began to create his own distinct literacy brand. His works are an amalgamation of allegory, self-discovery with spiritual themes and symbols. His works time and again recount the concept of quest, transformation and self-fulfillment. In the novel called

The Manual of Warrior of the light, Coelho compares himself with the warriors of the light who are normal people and still believe in the unknown. These warriors of light are the new spiritual adventures. They recognize each other because they also have something else in their eyes. This is the light of enthusiasm to live journey of life in its true essence. Then they discover things as they go along the labyrinths and mysteries of life. It is his work that gives him spiritual fulfillment which is connected to his soul. In addition to *The Pilgrimage*, *The Alchemist* and *Brida*, Coelho has written many novels about the different streams of life blended with his own experiences of life, including *The Valkyries*, *The Fifth mountain*, *By the River Piedra and Sat Down and wept Veronika decides to Die*, *The Zahir*, *The Witch of Partobello*, and *The Devil and Miss Prym*.

2. Critical View

Most of the critics have interpreted the novel from the perspective of philosophical exploration of sex as sacred sex (sexual love). Kirkus puts his idea about the novel that “sex is sacred, is more persuasively written, perhaps because it feels taken from a real life”(1). Another critic Paul Di Filippo comments on the novel, “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”(1).

The author himself elaborates the idea of sex as something that is important in life in one of his interviews. Paulo Coelho puts his ideas:

We believe 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 important? (1-2)

Jacket studies the novel in association to self-discovery. In this regard he examines: "In this odyssey of self-discovery, Maria has to choose 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). In this regard it has become clear that the text has been analyzed from more or less similar perspectives, the approach of quest-forming has not been applied yet. The proper study from this approach will provide unique insight to the meaning of the novel. It will raise the issue of how the protagonist of the novel accomplishes her quest-adventure in the similar manner of the hero of myth by following a basic pattern of mythical structure.

3. The Formation of quest in Coelho's (other) works

When we examine Paulo Coelho's works with bird's eye view we can trace out the influence of mythical adventure in subtle way. Most of his novels are based on journey of the central character whether it is for spiritual or material gain. His latest novel *Eleven Minutes* though it has a story of a prostitute and her struggle we can analyze her journey from her home to Switzerland and her returning similar to that of adventure of the hero of any mythical story. But the way and the purpose of adventure are different. These differences are in fact closely associated with the change that

scientific and technological development brought up. Not only this particular novel but his other novels like *The Alchemist*, *Veronika Decides to Die*, *The Valkyries*, *The Zahir*, *The Fifth Mountain*, *The Devil and Miss Prym*, *The warrior of the manual*, *The Witch of Portobello*, and so on reflects this sense of mythical journey. These novels follow the pattern of heroic mythical adventure under which we can observe three major stages- departure, initiation and return but has slightly varied manner.

In the novel *The Alchemist* the protagonist Santiago, a shepherd boy fulfills three phases of mythical journey. First he leaves his home in order to fulfill his dream. Then he travels the world in search of a treasure as extravagant as any ever found. This is his departure from his familiar world into unfamiliar world which might be dangerous for him. On the way, he meets the alchemist who clarifies much of his misguided agenda. This gentleman also convinces him to remain true to his dream and gives him a spiritual lesson. The alchemist says that the fear of suffering is worse than the life itself and also insist that life is a kind of journey. During this journey the hero gets maturity mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. This is hero's initiation which comprises his trial, test, and his spiritual gaining. At the end he is successful to find the location of true treasure. This treasure is not in outside world but in the inside of everyone. Now he realizes the importance of his familiar world around him which serves as omens that guide him towards his goal. Then this young shepherd boy becomes the alchemist in his own right which is his returning in modern sense

Coelho's another novel *The Valkyries* also follows the mythical pattern of adventure. In this novel the protagonist is the author himself who departs from his known world (his past) into the unknown world (his future) when he is instructed by his mysterious spiritual teacher to embark on a journey to Mojave Desert in order to get rid of devastating curse. The protagonist sets on journey with his wife. They have

to face different challenges and difficulties in that strange desert more than they expect for. This is an initiation of the hero. His journey embodies a New Age Conception of Liberation. This liberation is the liberation from the past and his confrontation with future along with his own self. The protagonist's triumph over the devastating curse, self doubt, and fear through spiritual journey is a kind of return of modern hero to his true self. So this novel is a sort of modern day adventure. In the novel *Veronika Decides to Die*, boredom and emptiness of present life compel the protagonist, Veronika, to commit suicide. But her attempt to commit suicide with over dose of sleeping pills fails. When she awakes she finds herself in the bed of mental hospital and comes to know that she has few days to live. Her close encounter with death makes her realize the importance of life. The protagonist departs from her previous life into new one. In the hospital she gets to know other people like Vilete, Dr. Igor, Eduard, and other. Each one has something to share with her. Now she begins to appreciate life and comes to learn the joy and pain of life. She realizes that to live is not just existing, but living each and every moment meaningfully. This is a kind of self discovery which can be considered her return to the previous life which she thinks empty. But now she finds it meaningful.

The Zahir is a story of one man's quest for self discovery. The narrator of the novel enters into an unknown zone in course of searching his lost journalist wife, Esther. The narrator goes through different trials and tests while searching his wife. Through his journey he comes to understand the reason that what makes her to leave him without informing him. This is the initiation of the hero. At the end, the narrator recaptures his lost love and discovers his true self. This signifies the returning of the narrator's true self which he never realizes. Coelho's another spiritual fiction *The Fifth Mountain* is about the quest of the biblical prophet Elijah. The protagonist,

Elijah separates from his natural way of life in order to course in his life amidst the confusion of the war and the political turmoil. His journey shows his spiritual crisis. It continues after he is taken in by the widow, Phoenician wife of the king and her son. But he falls in love with widow. Then he is confused whether he should follow his direction from an angel or to accept the love of widow. The widow is a Phoenician wife of the king who has ordered the murder of all who reject the pagan god Baal to Akbar. This is hero's initiation that he struggles with faith. Then he confronts with his thoughts, doubt, and discoveries. He is torn between the desire to serve god and the need of those he has come to love. Love and faith help the prophet to get over the difficulties. After he is thoroughly tested, he is sent up to heaven. This is his returning with triumph. In the similar manner Coelho's other novels like *The Devil and Miss Prym*, *The warrior of the manual*, *The Witch of Portobello* and so on also portray the basic ideas of heroic adventure of mono myth.

4. *Eleven Minutes*: A Heroic Adventure

The novel *Eleven Minutes* deals with a subject that is harsh, difficult and shocking. The title of this novel that Coelho has taken is inspired by Irving Wallace's novel *The seven Minutes* published in the 70s. It was found that Wallace's *The seven Minutes* deals with a long running legal battle over the banning of a book that takes a close look at sex. So this novel is censored and has never existed. Coelho imagines its content and determine to write it again.

Maria, a protagonist of the novel *Eleven Minutes*, is a prostitute from the interior of the Brazil. She belongs to the lower middle class family where her father is a sea travelling salesman and her mother is a seamstress. This young woman's girlhood experiment with romance convinces her that love is a delusion. So she thinks that she will never find a true love in her life. She believes that 'love' is a terrible thing that

will bring only suffering not happiness. After these bitter experiences of love affair with some boyfriends she starts to work in a shop as a shop girl but with limited prospects. As a young woman she is expecting something more in her life. It means she wants to improve her life standard than that of her father. Fame and fortune along with a rich and intelligent husband are the important things that she is endeavoring for. A vacation to Rio brings her in contact with a Swiss tourist who is looking to hire a Samba dancer for his club in Geneva. This gentleman promises her money, fame and adventurous life which are dreams of each woman. This attracts Maria. Then she makes a decision to leave Rio for Geneva/ Switzerland for better life.

In Switzerland, The protagonist works from a restaurant dancer to a high class prostitute for nearly a nine month until she accumulates enough money to buy a good house and farm land in Brazil. While working as a prostitute Maria goes through different trials and triumphs. Maria who is on a journey to find what true love is. On the way of her sexual life she meets her prince charming Ralf Hart, a painter, who truly loves her. But she ends up letting her own life guides her. She enters a life that leads her down the path of sexual awakenings and almost leads her to self destruction when she is introducing to all sides of sexual experience. Through the experiences that she gains from working as a prostitute with different kinds of men, Maria is getting more mature to understand life philosophically. She comes to the conclusion that sex is not the thing that makes man happy rather it is the union of both sex and love that makes a man happy in the context of marriage. However she is taking her life as an adventure- a voyage of self-exploration. She has no regret of living such a socially low graded life. Rather she accepts life as it comes before her. Finally, she is bold enough to manipulate the unfavorable circumstances as the time needs. These Maria's experience and perception, her emotion, dream, and struggle to understand

life are the major forces that enhance her maturity. Her pseudo-philosophical diary entries play a major role in exploring her views towards everything that comes before her even about her awakening of sexual life. This diary is the only place where she can expose herself frankly. At last this is a story of Maria's voyage of self-exploration.

II. Methodology

I. What is Myth?

The term 'myth' is derived from the Greek word 'mythos' which means 'word of mouth.' In general term, myth is defined as a sacred story or a sacred narrative. The content of myth, in a given culture or religion usually includes the story concerning the origins of the world and its creature. Moreover the characters of myth are gods and goddesses, heroes and heroines, or animals. Myth holds religious and spiritual significance of the culture or community to which it belongs. On the other hand, it

also expresses the systems of thoughts, beliefs and values of that culture. It also defines any cultural and religious activities of a community to which it belongs. Therefore it enhances the life of people that community. The myth embodies beliefs, concepts, and ways of questioning and making sense of the world. There was no any legal record of how myths come into existence in human history. Because most of myths are set in timeless past before any written history begins.

The dictionary meaning of myth is that it is ‘a traditional tale containing beliefs about ancient times or natural events and usually involving supernatural beings; an imaginary person or things.’ Since ancient time, myth has played a vital role in defining social life of man. So it is found in each and every culture and religion of every community of the world. Though the basic structure of any myth is same but the event and character of the myth is different. For instance, the narratives of Buddha, Moses, and Christ share the similar elementary ideas of myth though their surface structure (character and event) is different. Joseph Campbell is a pre-eminent scholar and an intelligent mythologist who has profound knowledge of myths from the world around as well as from different time and space. The book *The Hero with Thousand Faces* is his great contribution in the field of mythology which is very productive to study and research any mythical stories. Joseph Campbell said that myths are those stories which were in the minds of people to which human beings see its relevance to something that is happening in their life. They try to seek perspectives on what is happening in them. Therefore myth has supported human life and civilizations. Mythical stories from different religion and cultures share more or less similar pattern. Though their surface form is different their basic structure is same. Myth is the source of each and every form of society like religions, philosophies, arts, and the

social forms of primitive and historic man, prime discoveries of science and technology, and dream etc.

II. The quest adventure of the mythic hero

According to the mythologist, Joseph Campbell, the quest adventure of the myth is often referred to the journey of the hero to accomplish his goal. In this context, the hero's journey follows a basic pattern which is supposedly found in many mythological narratives from different cultures, religions and places around the world. Campbell holds a belief that numerous myths from different times and regions seem to share a fundamental structures and stages. In each and every mono myth, the hero sets out in his journey from the world of common day (known or familiar world of family, relatives, friends, etc.) and enters into the region of supernatural wonder (unfamiliar and alien world). In the journey, the hero encounters the fabulous forces and won a decisive victory. Then the hero comes back from this mysterious adventure with the power to bestow his acquired boon (knowledge and experience that he gained in his journey) on his fellow man along with the restoration of his community, nation or the whole world.

In this context, Joseph Campbell has created a straight way in which there are three main stages of mythical adventure that the hero of any mythical narratives goes through in his journey. They are departure, initiation and return.

A. Departure

In myth, the term 'departure' deals with the hero venturing forth on the quest in order to fulfill his destiny. The hero begins from the ordinary world. Then, he receives a call to enter an unknown world which is dark with strange power and

events. Departure, sometimes, is also called separation. This means a separation of the hero from his familiar world of family, friends and relatives into the unfamiliar new world. Departure contains three steps that the hero of the myth fulfill while carrying his journey of adventure. They are: a call to adventure, crossing of the first threshold, and the belly of the whale.

i. A call to Adventure

The first step of mythical adventure is a call to adventure that the hero of mythical story receives. As the hero receives a call, he begins his journey from the world that he knows and enters into the unfamiliar world of power and events. Joseph Campbell has summarized the call to adventure in his famous book *The Hero with Thousand Faces* as:

The herald or announcer of the adventure, therefore, is often dark, loathly, or terrifying, judged evil by the world; yet if one could follow, the way would be opened through the walls of day into the dark where the jewels glow. Or the herald is a beast (as in fairy tale, representative of the repressed instinctual fecundity within us, or again a veiled mysterious figure-the unknown). (53)

In this way, the adventure begins with the hero receiving a call to an action. On the one hand, the action taken by hero may be a threat to the peace of the community where the hero is living. On the other hand, this may be the hero's blunder and the hero simply falls into it. This kind of action is taken by the hero is either voluntarily or involuntarily. The call to an action or adventure is often announce to the hero by another character who acts as "herald" or "announcer." The "herald" or "announcer" of the adventure is often represented as dark, terrifying, loathly and evil by the ordinary world. This "herald" or "announcer" may call the hero to adventure simply

by the crisis of his appearance. If the hero could follow the announcer, the way of his journey would be opened through the walls of day (ordinary world) into the dark (alien world) where the glowing jewels (prosperity) attract him. On the other hand, the herald may be beast (monster or demon) as we find often in the fairy tale. Besides it may be representative of the character's repressed instinctual fertility which is an unknown mystery.

According to the principal of myth, an adventure of the hero may begin his journey, sometimes, as a blunder. A call to adventure happens not by any other reason but by the fault of hero himself. He is not conscious about the mysterious forces that try to draw him into a relationship that is not correctly understood by him. This means the unknown forces draws the hero into the unknown world by creating a new relationship with that forces which the hero of the myth does not understand. That's why the hero's mistake is a responsible factor that reveals the mysterious unfamiliar world that announces the call to action of the hero in order to begin his journey. This new zone is dangerous and the hero is unknown to the strange crises that he will have to encounter on the way his journey. Thus the blunder that the hero commits may amount to the opening of the path of quest-adventure towards his destiny. In order to prove the idea of call to adventure of myth, we can take an example of a fairy tale of the young princess in *The Hero with Thousand Faces* by Joseph Campbell. In this fairy tale, one day the youngest beautiful daughter of a king, along with her sisters was playing a golden ball near the dark forest. In that dark forest, there was a cool spring. While playing the ball, the princess was not able to catch the ball and it suddenly bounced on the ground. Then it rolled down directly into the water. The little princess followed it, but it disappeared into the deep water. The spring was so deep that its bottom cannot be seen. Thereupon, she began to cry louder and louder

and was also lamenting. Then, she heard that someone is calling her. It was the frog who lived in the water. This frog asked the little princess about the reason of her crying. She told him about the golden ball that was lost in the water while playing. The frog promised her to fetch back that ball. But, in return, the princess has to promise it to make him her companion and she has to play with him. The princess promised the frog. The frog goes straight down into the water and fetched the golden ball and tosses it on the ground. The princess was happy. She picked it up and went away. The frog called to await and take it along. But she paid no attention to the poor frog.

This is an example of one of the ways of fairy tale in which the adventure can begin. In this fairy tale, the blunders of the princess opens a merest chance that reveals her an unsuspected world of water. According to Campbell, Freud doesn't take blunders the merest chance. For him that is the result of suppressed desires and conflicts. In this fairy tale, the disappearance of the ball signifies the first thing that something unknown is coming for the princess. Likewise, the frog and the unconsidered promise are the second and the third thing respectively. The coming up of the frog was a miracle and can be termed as the "herald" or "announcer." The crises of his appearance are the "call to adventure." The herald summons the hero may be to live or to die. It marks the opening of new destiny where the hero can have "the awakening of the self" (51). In this fairy tale of the princess, this awakening signifies the coming of adolescence. There is always a mystery or transfiguration through a spiritual passage. The circumstances of the call are the dark forest, the great tree, the deep spring and unimagined appearance of frog who is the carrier of the power of destiny.

Sometimes the call to adventure happens out of the hero's own volition in myth. When the hero finds the familiar world, which formerly was meaningful, is strangely emptied of the values. Then, he decides to break the familiar horizon of life (threshold guardian) that is supported by the community because "The familiar life horizon has been outgrown; the old concepts, ideas, and emotional patterns no longer fit, the time for the passing of a threshold is at hand" (51). In this context, the hero no longer gives importance to the normal way of living. For him, norms and values of society become meaningless. Because of this reason he tries to seek his destiny in new world with new norms and values. He feels he will reach his goal in this new land. Now the hero is ready to pass the threshold to enter into the new zone. This vision of myth is also reflected in the lives of people of this modern age where people are leaving their old values and norms of their community and accepting new values and norms. Unlike the hero of myth they think that they will complete their quest by crossing old boundary of guardian threshold. The example of myth of Future Buddha will help to make clear the idea of crossing the threshold to enter into the new world.

The Future Buddha becomes weary of his way of life in the palace. He has been protected by his father (king) from all knowledge of the outer world such as the knowledge of old age, sickness, death and monkhood. The king tries his best to keep his son untouched by the reality of the life. But, at the moment when Buddha was ready to accept such life, the proper "herald" automatically appeared such as a decrepit old man, broken toothed, gray haired, crooked and bent of body, leaning on a staff, and trembling; 'a diseased man'; 'a dead man'; and 'a monk.' They are all fashioned by the God. This incident suddenly changes Buddha's life. The life of the carefully and decently clad monk who has retired from the world greatly influences him. The prince of the palace finds this life more pleasing than other. Now, Buddha

decides that he must venture away from accustomed weary life of the royal palace, so that he can attain spiritual enlightenment through the path of monk hood. Buddha is an example of such hero of the myth who can venture forth in his own volition to accomplish his adventure of spiritual quest.

In some mythical stories, the hero initially refuses the call to adventure because he fears the unknown world which may be dangerous and terrifying. When the hero rejects the call, he may suffer somehow. Either he eventually chooses to respond by setting forth on journey or may continue to decline the call. Sometimes, refusal of the call to adventure may convert the adventure into its negative. In this context, the hero may become victim and his flowering world may become a wasteland of dry stones without any meaning. Otherwise, the hero may be destined to be saved. After the hero accepted the call to adventure, he must encounter a protective figure that can be a supernatural aid. This provides the special tools and advice for the adventure to carry ahead. Such tools may be cosmic mother, amulet, weapons, male or female figure, hermit, etc. Then, the hero is ready to respond the call by crossing the first threshold of his adventure.

ii. The Crossing of the First Threshold

In myth, the term 'threshold' signifies the boundary line between the familiar and unfamiliar world of the hero. In this stage, the hero of mono myth must cross the threshold between the world he is familiar with and that which he is not. This threshold must be encountered by the hero in order to enter the new zone of experience as described by Joseph Campbell in his book *The Hero with Thousand Faces*:

With the personifications of his destiny to guide and aid him, the hero goes forward in his adventure until he comes to the “threshold guardian” at the entrance to the zone of magnified power. Such custodians bound the world in the four directions also up and down-standing for the limits of the hero’s present sphere, or life horizon. Beyond them are darkness, the unknown, and danger, just as beyond the parental watch is danger to the member of the tribe. (77-78)]

The hero is eager to fulfill his quest. He goes forth on his journey supported by supernatural aid. This supporting hand can be a protective figure that guides and directs the hero towards his destiny. The hero goes forward in his adventure until he comes to the “threshold guardian.” In the context of myth, the threshold is an entrance through which the hero enters into the unknown zone of magnified power. The “threshold” signifies the limits of hero’s present state of life horizon. Beyond it, there is unknown darkness which is both terrifying and dangerous. This darkness is beyond the parental watch because it is not the familiar world but the unfamiliar one. In this strange new world, hero is far from the protection of his society and parents. This new zone may be prohibited by the members of society. Whatever things happen during the journey of hero is beyond his control because he is not following the way as per the rules and regulation of his community. This is what Joseph Campbell has said in the book *The Power of Myth*, while giving his interview with the scholar Bill Moyer regarding the issue of myth and mythology that “we are beyond protection in a field of higher powers than we know” (197). In order to find what hero desires, he has to leave the old and goes in the quest of the ‘seed idea’ by entering into the sphere which is in the authority of some super natural power. Although the hero knows this sphere is out of his control, he carries out his adventure to discover that germinal idea which contains the potentiality of hero to bringing forth his voyage.

The adventure is not a simple thing that can be accomplished easily. This requires the quality of a real hero because adventure is always and everywhere a passage that is unknown to him. The authority who is watching this threshold boundary is dangerous. That's why it is very risky to overcome this power. But it is the necessity of the hero of myth to find his way at any cost. With competence and courage, the hero, at last, shows his bravery to win over that danger. In this context, Joseph Campbell gives his vision regarding mythical adventure:

The adventure is always and everywhere a passage beyond the veil of the known into the unknown; the power that watches at the boundary is dangerous; to deal with them is risky; yet for anyone with competence and courage the danger fades.
(82)

Beyond the established bounds of threshold guardian, there is the destructive force of power. The hero, who has challenged the normal boundary of life should have passed it either alive or death. The watcher (society, parents) of the threshold guardian doesn't permit the hero to enter that veil mystery of unknown land because to enter this new boundary is a risky task. Being bold hero wants to do new thing in his life. For this he must have competence and courage to tackle the expected danger of new zone of experience.

Two examples from the book *The Hero with Thousand Faces* will illuminate the idea of the crossing of the first threshold of quest adventure. First example is the mythical story of a caravan leader from Benares who meets death while crossing the first threshold. Another example is the mythical story of the Prince Five-weapons who is alive (because of his competence and courage) while crossing the first threshold of his adventure.

In the first story, the foolish caravan leader from The Benares richly loaded the expedition of five hundred carts into a waterless demon wilderness. He is for warned of dangers of meeting an ogre who kills everyone that he sees. He is carrying with him a large amount of food and water. But the deceitful ogre comes along with other demons to give company to the group caravan. These demons deceitfully convince the caravan leader that the forest is full of water and foods. So he doesn't need to carry all these things. It is better to carry out his journey at ease. The foolish caravan leader easily believes and throws away the water along with foods and other goods. Then the Ogres disappear. There is no food for oxen as well. The weakened men lay down here and there and went to sleep. Same is the case of oxen. At the mid night, the ogres approached from the city of ogres. They slew the men and oxen, and eat them. The bones of the men and oxen scattered everywhere. The foolish caravan leader from the Benares, out of his foolishness, took the advice of ogres, and meets death while crossing the first threshold of the adventure.

The second story of the Prince Five-weapon is different from the story of the caravan leader of Benares. The young prince, after completed his military under a world-renowned teacher, accepted the five weapons that his teacher gave him. On the way leading to the city of his father, the king, he came to a certain forest (unknown zone). People warned him not to enter the forest where the ogre lives who kills man. This young prince is bold and courageous. As a real hero he is ready to face the danger. He entered the forest and encountered the ogre who tried to terrify the prince by increasing the stature of his body as big as the height of palm tree. The ogre asked him, why he is here? Though it is well known to that entire people he will kill each and every person that he sees the prince responses tactfully with confidence that he doesn't fear death because death is absolutely certain. He further said that he has a

weapon of thunderbolt in his belly. If the ogre kills and eats his body, this weapon will also kill the ogre because the ogre cannot digest it. Besides the weapon of thunderbolt is the weapon of knowledge that no one can destroy. Due to fear of the death, the ogre leaves the princess to go forth on his journey. This young prince is an earlier incarnation of the Future Buddha, who has made the ogre self denying. Therefore he is able to pass the boundary of the threshold fearlessly and remains alive.

iii. The Belly of the Whale

The belly of the whale is that stage of myth in which the hero enters into the unknown world that is represented as a dark place. In this context of myth, the hero is either successful to come out of the belly (dark place) by being transformed or the hero is swallowed into it. Regarding this principal of myth, Joseph Campbell's vision of belly of the whale is more supportive. He said that "the belly is the dark place where digestion takes place and new energy is created" (180) in one of his interviews with Bill Moyers. The belly of the whale is compared with the world that is unknown to the hero of the myth. The story of the Jonah in the belly of the whale carries this mythic theme where the hero goes into the fish's belly and ultimately comes out of the belly being transformed. On the other hand, the hero instead of conquering the power of the threshold is swallowed into the unknown world (belly of the whale). It is thought that he is dead. As far as the matter of belly of the whale is concerned in myth, Campbell has explained that it is:

the passage of the magical thresholds a transit into a sphere of rebirth is symbolized in the worldwide womb image of the belly of the whale. The hero,

instead of conquering or conciliating the power of the threshold, is swallowed into the unknown, and would appear to have died. (90)

The belly of whale symbolizes the alien world that may be supportive for the hero to complete his journey. Otherwise the hero may lose in this new world. If the hero is succeeding to cross the guardian threshold, he may enter into the sphere of mysterious land. In this world, the hero of myth may be transformed through the means of rebirth. Then he is again ready to journey ahead. The biblical example of John the Baptist, who baptizes Jesus before Jesus begins his public ministry, will support the idea of rebirth. Another example to illustrate this stage of myth is that of mythical story of Dionysus. In this story, the hungry titans tear apart the child's body and consume his flesh. But, the heart of the child is saved by the goddess Hestia so that Dionysus can reborn again as the god. This is the good example to illuminate the idea of the belly of the whale in the story of myth. In this story, Dionysus, the protagonist is reborn and transformed into god after he is dead.

The belly of the whale is a popular motif in the adventure of mono myth. It gives emphasis to the message that the passage of the threshold is a form of self-annihilation where the hero instead of passing outward beyond the normal world, he goes inward in order to be born again.

B. Initiation

'Initiation' deals with the hero's various trials and tests on the way of his journey. After crossing the first threshold, the hero travels into a new landscape of his dream. This is the trial period of the hero where his capability is judged through different trials and tests, so that he can enter into the unfamiliar world. The road of trials,

apotheosis and the ultimate boon are the three phases that comes under the topic of initiation in mythical tradition.

i. The Road of Trials

The road of trials is the popular phase of mythical adventure. In this stage, as soon as the hero enters into the unfamiliar world, he will have to encounter different obstacles and difficulties in his journey. The hero thinks that the world of new is full of opportunities that will pave the way to reach his destiny. Actually this principal of myth can also be found in the lives of people of modern era. To achieve whatever they desire, they are ready to accept each and every challenge that comes forth on their way. On the other hand the rapid development of science and technology is the result of ambitious desire of man. As he goes through different sorts of trials and tests, he comes closer to his destiny. So the hero is ready to face the tests and ordeals in order to accomplish his destiny. The road of trials is the first step of initiation of the hero into the world that he is not familiar with. Joseph Campbell has extended the idea of the road of trials in this way that "Once having traversed the threshold, the hero moves in a dream landscape of curiously fluid, ambiguous forms, where he must survive a succession of trials" (97). In the journey, new challenges will create a problem for hero. During his adventure, the hero will also make allies and enemies. In this context, either the hero may react under stress, or he may show his heroic character. Besides, if the hero is fortunate he might be supported by the advice, amulets, and secret agents of the supernatural power. In myth, this agent is the same helper whom the hero met before his entrance into this unfamiliar region.

With the help of supernatural power, the hero is capable to survive the crises that come in his way unexpectedly. However, this is the difficult test of the adventure that

the hero should perform in order to give pace to his journey. For instance, the mythical story of Psyche's quest for her lost lover, Cupid, depicts the challenges that are faced by the Psyche. This story is taken from Joseph Campbell's book *The Hero with the Thousand Faces*. In this story, the bride (Psyche) is trying to win her lover, Cupid from the jealous mother, Venus. But the problem is that, the mother is hiding her son from his bride. In fact, this story is different from other mythical stories, because the heroine is in her journey to accomplish her quest (to win Cupid), not the hero. For this reason, the heroine has to pass through different tests that are put before her by her mother in law, Venus. In this road of trial, the bride (psyche) is aided by an army of ants and she is able to do whatever was told by the Venus.

According to the principal of myth, the hero of the myths and legends, whether god or goddess, man or woman discovers and assimilates his opposite, and his own unsuspected self either by swallowing it or by being swallowed. On the one hand, the resistances, on the way of adventure, are broken by the hero one by one to complete his quest adventure. On the other hand, he puts aside his pride, his virtue, beauty along with his past life (of familiar world) and becomes the part of unfamiliar world where he can fulfill his goal, his dream, and his destiny. As he gains maturity through his experience in new zone, the hero gets knowledge that he and his opposite are not different but the one flesh.

As far as the adventure of myth is concerned, the original adventure of the hero begins after his departure into the unfamiliar world of trials and ordeals. The path of initiatory quest and moment of illumination is in fact very complicated. Dragon is often regarded as the enemy of the hero which obstructs his way. So it is the essence

of myth to kill that dragon and continue his journey again. In this context, Campbell has described the passing of road of trial in the adventure as:

the original departure into the land of trials represented only the beginning of the long and really perilous path of initiatory conquest and moments of illumination. Dragons have to be slain and surprising barriers passed-again, and again. Meanwhile there will be multitude of preliminary victories, unattainable ecstasies, and momentary glimpses of the wonderful land. (109)

When the hero is successful to overcome the barriers of his way, there will be multitude preceding victories, unattainable ecstasies, and momentary glimpses of the wonderful land. Besides, the hero has to fulfill the ultimate trial that represents the union of the hero with a female figure, or if the hero is a female figure, the union should be with a male figure. That is, the marriage represents the ultimate victory of the hero in the journey. Otherwise, the hero reconciles with the father figure of authority of threshold or with his family and relatives.

ii. Apotheosis

'Apotheosis' is that phase of adventure where the hero reaches at the divine state, beyond from ordinary approach of human mind. In this stage of myth, the ego of the hero is not annihilated; rather, it is enlarged. In this case, the ego of the hero is disintegrated and comes closer to the reality of life different from what he has thought before. The hero, instead of thinking only about himself, starts thinking about other. Then he becomes conscious about the importance of his life for his society and its people. Therefore he dedicates his life for the well being of the whole of his society. The hero discovers his own potentiality to do new thing for other's benefit. His point of view to see the world becomes broader. In this way, he transcends the ordinary life and reaches to the divine state. This is what Campbell has asserted that "The hero has become, by virtue of the ceremonial, more than man" (151). For instance, in the myth of Bodhisattva, the Buddha under the Bo tree, has reached the state of 'Nirvana' by giving up the worldly desire and hostility. The only primary thing that Buddha wants is 'peace.' Desire and hostility are the personification of the threshold guardian that is passed by the universal hero in his adventure. Here, the world of 'Nirvana' symbolizes the state of apotheosis in the process of initiation.

In Hindu myth, Shiva appears united in a single body with Shakti. This manifestation is called Ardhanarisha, "The Half-Woman Lord." This is the example of stage of apotheosis where two opposites are merged and becomes one flesh that is a divine state which is beyond the reach of normal mind.

iii. The Ultimate Boon

The 'ultimate boon' is the reward that the hero of myth gets after getting victory in his voyage. This boon may be treasure, knowledge, experience, and other

things that the hero gains in his adventure. In this stage of initiation where the hero is near to obtain his destiny for which he sets out in his journey. In this context, the hero achieves his goal and new awareness that will be boon for him. In myth, most of the time the hero is from noble family like king. So he is considered to be a superior man who will be the incarnation of god. This is what Campbell has written regarding the hero of a myth or a fairy tale:

The ease with which the adventure is here accomplished signifies that the hero is a superior man, a born king. Such ease distinguishes numerous fairy tales and all legends of the deeds of incarnate gods. (173)

One of the examples from the Hindu myth will illustrate the idea of ultimate boon. According to this Hindu myth, there was a long battle that happened for thousands years between the titans and the gods for the liquor of immortality, “amrita.” Here, in this example, “amrita” is the ultimate boon which both parties of titans and gods desire for being immortal. Another example is taken from the myth of Prometheus. The hero, Prometheus steals fire from the sun god and brings it to the well being of the society. In this myth, the “fire” as a treasure signifies the ultimate boon that Prometheus gets from his adventure. After returning to his familiar world, this boon benefits the people of his society which he has left before. Sword, thunderbolt, magical stick, fire etc. are some of the examples of boon that the hero of myth or fairy tale obtains in his voyage in order to accomplish his quest. For example, after obtaining Nirvana, Buddha doubted whether he could communicate the path of enlightenment “peace” (rejection of hostility and desire) with his fellow beings of the world that he knows or not. In this context, Campbell has asserted that the hero may need to be rescued from his adventure by the forces from the ordinary

world which can be seen in the case of Buddha. After realizing his duty to his community and its people he returns to his familiar world to communicate his path of enlightenment.

As the hero of the myth, crosses the threshold after threshold by conquering the dragon after dragon (obstacle or enemy in his way), becomes able to reach the state of divinity, a superior being by transcending his previous life and becomes the part of the cosmos. The Buddha's victory beneath the Bo Tree is the classical example of gaining the ultimate boon in the path of initiation of his adventure. The knowledge of "peace" is the basic thing of happy life, which Buddha has gained from his adventure, is brought back to the society for its well being.

C. Return

The term 'Return' deals with the hero's return home (familiar world) from alien land power and boon that he has acquired along the way of the adventure. However, having found the bliss and enlightenment in the other world, the hero of myth may or may not want to return to the familiar world (home) to bestow the knowledge and boon that he has gained onto the people of his community. Regarding the idea of refusal to return home, Campbell claims that refusal of the return is the refusal of responsibility by the hero after his quest has been accomplished through the grace of some supporter (man or woman, animal, god etc). For instance, after obtaining 'Nirvana', Buddha doubted whether he should communicate the path of bliss and enlightenment with his fellow man of the ordinary world or not. When Buddha realizes the importance of his boon that will benefit the society, he decides to return home to restore and improve his society.

In mythical adventure, if the hero refuses to return home from the world of wonder, “The hero may have to be brought back from his supernatural adventure by assistance from without. That is to say the world may have to come and get him” (207). The hero of the myth, having cast off from the familiar world, desires to return again. For this he needs the assistance from the ordinary world. This is the call of the life to the hero because, the society is jealous of those who remain away from it. So, it will come to knock at the door of the hero for his returning. This is to say that the hero may need to be rescued by the forces from the ordinary world. After the call of the life from ordinary world, the hero is ready to return home from the new zone. He is also ready to share his boon (wisdom and knowledge) with his fellowman. Then, the hero becomes a ceremonial figure and a good example for the future generation of the known world. The hero, in his triumph, wins the blessing of the god or Goddess and is commissioned to return to the world. But the hero is either supported by the supernatural power or he has been resented by the opposition party (enemy, demon, guardian, god etc) in his return journey. Now, the hero reaches the point where he has to cross the return threshold.

i. The Crossing of the Return Threshold

In this stage of myth, the hero returns to the world of common day (ordinary world) from the alien world. The hero accepts the ordinary world as real. Joseph Campbell has described this stage in this way:

The hero adventures out of the land we know into darkness; there he accomplished his adventure, or again is simply lost to us, imprisoned, or in danger; and his return is described as coming back out of that Yonder zone. (217)

The first problem of the hero in returning journey is that the hero at any cost has to return to his root (the ordinary \familiar world). But the hero doesn't want to return after experiencing bliss of the new world. Gradually, he is assimilating the world that he doesn't know first. Then he tries to knit together his two worlds. This is true in mythical adventure that "The returning hero, to complete his adventure, must survive the impact of the world" (226). In the myth of Kamar al-Zaman, Kaamar al-Zaman is the returning hero who has survived the impact of the world to complete his adventure. He had the best luck because he was able to experience the bliss of deep sleep awake. In this context, Kamar al-Zaman returned to the light of day with such a convincing talisman of his unbelievable adventure that he "was able to retain his self-assurance in the face of every sobering disillusionment" (226) on his returning journey. But there are some other mythical heroes rose like Rip Van Winkle, who "never knew what he had experienced; his return was a joke" (226) and Oisín who "knew, but he lost his centering in it and so collapsed" (226). These three heroes depict different versions of return journey of mythical adventure of the hero.

The crossing of returning threshold, in the context myth, is a kind of operation of a destiny that the hero has been summoned again into the life of an ordinary world. The heroes of myth, like Jesus Christ, Moses, Prometheus and Buddha, who perceive both the divine and human worlds are successful to return to the ordinary world (society) after resurrection and rebirth. These figures of myth are more than an ordinary man after returning from their quest-adventure. They bestow their boon to their fellow man for their better and improved life. Now, these mythical heroes have freedom to live in both worlds. They are free from the bonds of space and time.

In brief, the hero of quest-adventure follows a basic structure of myth in order to accomplish his journey. During his journey, the hero passes through three different stages- departure (a call to adventure, the crossing of the first threshold and the belly of the whale), initiation (the road of trials, apotheosis and the ultimate boon), and return (the crossing of the return threshold). They are also called the hero's acts in mythical trend.

III. A Heroic Adventure in Paulo Coelho's novel *Eleven Minutes*

i. Quest adventure in Coelho's other works

As a researcher I have found most of Coelho's novel following the traditional trend of mythical heroic adventure. However such trend is not similar to the traditional mythical story. Coelho's novel is rather written in modern way. Before entering into the textual analysis, I would like to define the term 'myth'. The term 'myth' is derived from the Greek word 'mythos' which means 'word of mouth'. In general term, myth is defined as a sacred story or a sacred narrative. The content of myth, in a given culture or religion usually includes the story concerning the origins of the world and its creature. Moreover the characters of myth are gods and goddesses, heroes and heroines, or animals. The dictionary meaning of myth is that it is 'a traditional tale containing beliefs about ancient times or natural events and usually involving supernatural beings; an imaginary person or things'. The basic structure of any mono myth or mythical adventure is same but the event and character of the myth is different in surface. For instance, the narratives of Buddha, Moses, and Christ share the similar elementary ideas of myth. According to the mythologist, Joseph Campbell, myths are those stories which were in the minds of people to which human beings see its relevance to something that is happening in their life.

When we examine Paulo Coelho's works with bird's eye view we can trace out the influence of mythical adventure in subtle way. His latest novel *Eleven Minutes* though it has a story of a prostitute and her struggle we can analyze her journey from her home to Switzerland and her returning similar to that of adventure of the hero of any mythical story. But the way and the purpose of adventure are different. These

differences are in fact closely associated with the change that scientific and technological development brought up. Not only this particular novel but his other novels like *The Alchemist*, *Veronika Decides to Die*, *The Valkyries*, *The Zahir*, *The Fifth Mountain*, *The Devil and Miss Prym*, *The warrior of the manual*, *The Witch of Portobello*, and so on reflects this sense of mythical journey. These novels follow the pattern of heroic mythical adventure under which we can observe three major stages- departure, initiation and return but has slightly varied manner.

In the novel *The Alchemist* the protagonist Santiago, a shepherd boy fulfills three phases of mythical journey. First he leaves his home in order to fulfill his dream. Then he travels the world in search of a treasure as extravagant as any ever found. This is his departure from his familiar world into unfamiliar world which might be dangerous for him. On the way, he meets the alchemist who clarifies much of his misguided agenda. This gentleman also convinces him to remain true to his dream and gives him a spiritual lesson. The alchemist says that the fear of suffering is worse than the life itself and also insist that life is a kind of journey. During this journey the hero gets maturity mentally, emotionally, and spiritually. This is hero's initiation which comprises his trial, test, and his spiritual gaining. At the end he is successful to find the location of true treasure. This treasure is not in outside world but in the inside of everyone. Now he realizes the importance of his familiar world around him which serves as omens that guide him towards his goal. Then this young shepherd boy becomes the alchemist in his own right which is his returning in modern sense.

Coelho's another novel *The Valkyries* also follows the mythical pattern of adventure. In this novel the protagonist is the author himself who departs from his known world (his past) into the unknown world (his future) when he is instructed by his mysterious spiritual teacher to embark on a journey to Mojave Desert in order to

get rid of devastating curse. The protagonist sets on journey with his wife. They have to face different challenges and difficulties in that strange desert more than they expect for. This is an initiation of the hero. His journey embodies a New Age Conception of Liberation. This liberation is the liberation from the past and his confrontation with future along with his own self. The protagonist's triumph over the devastating curse, self doubt, and fear through spiritual journey is a kind of return of modern hero to his true self. So this novel is a sort of modern day adventure. In the novel *Veronika Decides to Die*, boredom and emptiness of present life compel the protagonist, Veronika, to commit suicide. But her attempt to commit suicide with over dose of sleeping pills fails. When she awakes she finds herself in the bed of mental hospital and comes to know that she has few days to live. Her close encounter with death makes her realize the importance of life. The protagonist departs from her previous life into new one. In the hospital she gets to know other people like Vilette, Dr. Igor, Eduard, and other. Each one has something to share with her. Now she begins to appreciate life and comes to learn the joy and pain of life. She realizes that to live is not just existing, but living each and every moment meaningfully. This is a kind of self discovery which can be considered her return to the previous life which she thinks empty. But now she finds it meaningful.

The Zahir is a story of one man's quest for self discovery. The narrator of the novel enters into an unknown zone in course of searching his lost journalist wife, Esther. The narrator goes through different trials and tests while searching his wife. Through his journey he comes to understand the reason that what makes her to leave him without informing him. This is the initiation of the hero. At the end, the narrator recaptures his lost love and discovers his true self. This signifies the returning of the narrator's true self which he never realizes.

Coelho's another spiritual fiction *The Fifth Mountain* is about the quest of the biblical prophet Elijah. The protagonist, Elijah separates from his natural way of life in order to course in his life amidst the confusion of the war and the political turmoil. His journey shows his spiritual crisis. It continues after he is taken in by the widow, Phoenician wife of the king and her son. But he falls in love with widow. Then he is confused whether he should follow his direction from an angel or to accept the love of widow. The widow is a Phoenician wife of the king who has ordered the murder of all who reject the pagan god Baal to Akbar. This is hero's initiation that he struggles with faith. Then he confronts with his thoughts, doubt, and discoveries. He is torn between the desire to serve god and the need of those he has come to love. Love and faith help the prophet to get over the difficulties. After he is thoroughly tested, he is sent up to heaven. This is his returning with triumph. In the similar manner Coelho's other novels like *The Devil and Miss Prym*, *The warrior of the manual*, *The Witch of Portobello* and so on also portray the basic ideas of heroic adventure of mono myth.

ii. Detailed Analysis of the Text (*Eleven Minutes*)

“Once upon a time, there was a prostitute called Maria” (1) is the beginning of the novel, *Eleven Minutes* which itself is in a mythical fashion by introducing the protagonist, Maria, as a prostitute who earns her living by selling her body. The major character of the novel, Maria, has fulfilled the prerequisites of a typical hero's acts-departure, initiation and return as in the adventure of mythical stories. The way of fulfilling this act is not same as that of ancient time. But the basic pattern is same which can be accepted as the mythical structure. However myth also evolves with the passing time.

The character and the event may be different from particular religion and culture but the basic content or message is same. Campbell has given the example of the great prophets like Buddha, Moses, and Jesus:

The Buddha went into solitude and then sat beneath the bo tree, the tree of immortal knowledge, when he received an illumination that has enlightened all of Asia for twenty-five hundred years.

After baptism by John the Baptist, Jesus went into the desert for forty days; and it was out of that desert that he came with his message. Moses went to the top of a mountain and come down with the tables of the law.(167)

In above example the Buddha, the Jesus and the Moses all have gone through adventure for a certain quest. When their quest is fulfilled they return to the social life. Like this, the lady Maria has her adventure which is somehow different from the adventure of mythical hero though she has fulfilled the typical hero's acts-departure, initiation and return in a modern mythical trend. The mythologist, Campbell, has summarized the quest adventure of the hero in modern way that "In order to found something new, one has to leave the old and go in quest of the seed idea, a germinal idea that will have the potentiality of bringing forth that new thing" (167). In ancient time the quest of adventure of the hero is mainly the spiritual one and it is for the wellbeing of the society. But in modern time this quest is for material prosperity, social status and it is also for individual purpose. This can be fulfilled by leaving the old ideas and values so that the new thing can be found. It is certain that the quest-adventure of the hero will have potentiality to bring new thing, the germinal idea.

A. Departure

In the mono myth, the term 'departure' deals with the hero venturing forth on the quest in order to fulfill his destiny. The hero begins from the ordinary world. Then, he

receives a call to enter an unknown world which is dark with strange power and events. Departure contains three steps that the hero of the myth fulfill while carrying his journey of adventure. They are- call to adventure, the crossing of the threshold and the belly of the whale.

i. Call to Adventure

The first step of mythical adventure is a call to adventure that the hero receives. As the hero receives a call, he begins his journey from the world that he knows and enters into the unfamiliar world of power and events.

“Like all prostitute, she was born both innocent and a virgin, and, as an adolescent, she dreamed of meeting the man of her life (rich, handsome, 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)”(1). The protagonist, Maria, is not born prostitute by her birth. She belongs to the middle class family who lives in the small hometown in the interior of the Brazil. This is a village, which is situated in the lap of the nature and is untouched by the modernity of the city life. Maria’s hometown has limited infrastructures like one cinema hall, one night club and one bank. The protagonist like other ordinary woman has a simple dream of meeting her future prince charming (would be husband) who will be rich, handsome and intelligent, and getting married with him. Maria, as she belongs to a middle class family where her father is a travelling salesman along with her mother a seamstress, wants a good home, good husband and children in her life. She is innocent and does not have access to the luxury of so called modern city life. As in a fairy tale, she hopes that one day her dream boy would arrive, sweep her off and take her away with him so that they could conquer the world together.

Maria works as a shop girl in order to support her parents economically. She has saved up her dream to visit and enjoy the city life of Rio de Janeiro. When she reaches Rio de Janeiro, she feels a kind of freedom that she has never felt when she is in her own hometown. The fascination of city life allures Maria. In Rio de Janeiro, Maria meets a Swiss tourist who compels her to work as a 'Samba Star' in Switzerland in his club and promises her fame and fortune. This gentleman is too clever because he knows what an ordinary girl of the interior of Brazil wants in her life that is adventure, money and husband. And thus he becomes able to convince Maria through the intermediary, Mailson, to work as a 'Samba Star' in abroad where she can have both fame and fortune; where she can have work and dollar. Here is a call to adventure.

In mythical story "The mythological hero, setting forth from his common day hut or castle, is lured, carried away, or else voluntarily proceeds; to the threshold of adventure" (245) as said by Campbell. Maria is called to an adventure by a Swiss tourist who promises her destiny-fame and fortune in a foreign land. This is a journey from familiar world to the unfamiliar one; from known to the unknown reality, which can be influenced and interpreted with the dark and light, both.

ii. The Crossing of the Threshold

The term 'threshold' signifies the boundary line between the familiar and unfamiliar world of the hero. The hero of mono myth must cross the threshold between the world he is familiar with and that which he is not. This threshold must be encountered by the hero in order to enter the new zone of experience.

According to Campbell that "The adventure is always and everywhere a passage beyond the veil of the known into the unknown; the power that watch at the boundary are dangerous, to deal with them is risky; yet for anyone with competence and

courage the danger fades” (82, HWTF). Maria with courage is ready to explore an unknown world through her adventure which is different and unfamiliar one for the village girl in order to fulfill her desire of money or of a husband. She is ready to face each and every trial that comes in her way. Maria asserts in her diary that “What does the world want of me? Does it want me take no risks, to go back where and came from because and didn’t have the courage to say ‘Yes’ to life?” (26). Maria is bold and determinate to accomplish her journey. She is ready to bear any kind of risk. She doesn’t want to miss this opportunity which she waits so eagerly. She further intends that “I can choose either to be a victim of the world or an adventurer in search of treasure” (39). This is the quality of the real hero that can be seen in Maria like that of mythical hero.

As soon as Maria reaches Switzerland with the Swiss tourist, she starts dancing in his club as a samba dancer. The situation though she prefers, but sounds quite out of her expectation. Like other Brazilian women, she is also a victim of Swiss man’s deception. Maria feels the ground shifting beneath her. She expresses her feeling like that:

I didn’t even have time to recover from the long flight, I had to start smiling and dancing on the very first night. There are six of us and not of us is happy and none of us knows what are doing here. The customers drinks and applaud, blow kisses and privately make obscene gestures, but that’s as far as it goes. (39)

Maria finds the job of samba dancer disrespectful. Thus, starts the Maria’s unexpected journey of life in a new land. However, Maria discovered that she has enough will power to come over this situation, so she stops crying every night for her wrong decision. She is determined and bold. Now she thinks that what she needed to do was to earn money, to know the foreign country and return home victorious.

iii. Belly of the whale

The story of the Jonah in the belly of the whale carries this mythic theme where the hero goes into the fish's belly and ultimately comes out of the belly being transformed. On the other hand, the hero instead of conquering the power of the threshold is swallowed into the unknown world (belly of the whale). Here, Maria becomes ready even to take pain and suffering. She leaves the familiar world, over which she has some measure of control. Then she comes to a threshold where a monster (Swiss tourist) of the abyss (foreign land) comes to meet him. In the story of myth, there are two possibilities. One is like the mythical story of the Jonah type, where a hero is swallowed and later resurrected. Another form of possibility is that the hero, on encountering the power of dark, may overcome and kill the enemy (mainly dragon in myth). Maria in this novel is first swallowed by the desire of material prosperity and fame in such a new country. But at the end of the novel Maria is able to achieve the victory. "The belly is the dark place and new energy is created" (180) as described by Campbell. The foreign land, Switzerland, can be considered as a belly for Maria that is mysterious. But she emerges in the same place with new energy. She thinks to live life is to take risk and hoping that there will be better future.

As in the mythical story, hero encounters a shadow presence that guards the passage, Maria in this novel *Eleven Minutes* encounters the restricted life of restaurant and its owner Roger who doesn't allow her a public life. Maria disobeys Roger and dares to come out of four wall of his restaurant. As she enrolls in French language class, she comes to know the word 'lawyer' and she also knows the rule of law in Switzerland is very strict. Maria is young but not fool. She uses the word 'lawyer' to threaten Roger for his exploitation. In return she gets five thousand dollars in compensation. This is a sum of money beyond her wildest dream. Though she has

enough money to buy ticket and go back to Brazil she thinks her dream still is not fulfilled. She wants to invest that money to build up her career by doing modeling and get a position. So, she spends a large part of her money on an excellent photographer in order to get some professional photos so that she can spend them to model agencies. Unfortunately, she has to do anything for a model agency suddenly transforms her life. This is a call from an Arab man who offers her thousand francs to spend a night with him. Arab man says “If you come up and have a drink with me in my hotel room, I’ll give you a thousand francs (54).” Maria is shocking. She thinks modeling is a good profession. But she never thought about its negative aspect that the prostitution is hiding behind in such popular profession. But she desperately needs money. So, she decides to do compromise with life. She is ready to go with an Arab man. Thereby she starts to work as a prostitute, a high-class prostitute.

2. Initiation

‘Initiation’ deals with the hero’s various trials and tests on the way of his journey. After crossing the first threshold, the hero travels into a new landscape of his dream. This new zone appears in ambiguous forms where the hero has to pass different trials and tests, so that he can enter into the unfamiliar world. The road of trials, apotheosis and the ultimate boon are the three steps for the initiation of the hero of the myth.

i. The road of Trials

The tests and ordeals that the hero of the myth faces in the way of journey are the roads of Trials. Campbell elaborates the idea of adventure that “In order to found something new, one has to leave the old and go in quest of the seed idea, a germinal idea that will have the potentiality of bringing forth of new idea” (167). In this context, Maria goes into new country by leaving her family in the quest of gaining something new that her family and her friend have not achieved yet. Unfortunately,

this is not easy as she thinks earlier when she meets that Swiss gentleman who is the gateway of her new journey.

As Maria involves in prostitution, she has to go through roads of trials. But Maria admits “oddly enough, I have no sense of guilt (57)”. She has no sense of guilt and she feels a kind of freedom in a strange city where she doesn’t need to answer anybody why she chooses such profession. Maria thinks that “There she was in a strange city where she knew no one, but what had been a torment to her yesterday, today gave her a tremendous sense of freedom, because she didn’t need to explain herself to anyone”(59). Maria takes advantage of this strange city. There she lives life as the life takes her which she couldn’t feel in Brazil because of presence of her parents and relatives. Maria takes life of prostitute is just the one phase of her life. Maria works as a prostitute in Copacabana Milan where the owner of Copacabana who hesitates to call it ‘brothel’ because only the arrangements are made there. Client and prostitute are not allowed to spend a night there. Milan charges fifty francs out of three hundred and fifty francs for each arrangement. Maria has to go three times a night.

ii. Apotheosis

‘Apotheosis’ is that phase of adventure where the hero reaches the divine state, more than man. The hero becomes the supremely good example for his society. With the passing time Maria gets used to the life of prostitute. Instead of regretting what she is doing, she uses the same socially low graded profession as her medium to achieve her dream. Being in prostitution, she comes to meet different faces of man. Some are rich and some are poor. But each of them is not happy with their life though they have prosperity and family. They lack in love in their married life. Therefore, they come there in order to find solace, peace and happiness. Maria unlike other prostitutes plays the role of both the ‘Innocent Girl’ and the ‘Understanding Mother’

depending on the client. She comes to know more about life and its mysteries. A man has both money and wife but why does not he find happiness in his life. Maria thinks that “Love is not to be found in someone else, but in ourselves; we simply awaken it. But in order to do that, we need the other person. The universe only makes sense when we have someone to share our feelings with “(118). It is love not only sex that makes people happy. The adventure is always and everywhere a passage beyond the veil of the known into the unknown. Maria is trying to explore not a physical sex but a ‘sacred sex’ where love lies.

Joseph Campbell writes “Meanwhile there will be a multitude of preliminary victories, unretainable ecstasies, and momentary glimpses of the wonderful” (109) in an adventure. When Maria decides to go to foreign land, she has undergone many hardships of life. First, she is deceived by the Swiss gentleman. This man makes her work in his restaurant as a bar dancer though he promises her to work as the samba star with good salary. Second, Maria is turned into prostitute when she applied for modeling to build her career. And lastly, Maria is ready to face the life as it comes. So she uses the same profession of prostitution as her means to earn her living. Nevertheless, Maria has spent the last nine months in Switzerland controlling the world around her. She is finding that she is capable of loving without demanding anything in return and of suffering for no reason. For Maria “It was as if life had chosen this strange, sordid way of teaching her darkness” (152). Maria says that there is presence of two women within her: one wants to have all the joy, passion, and adventure that life can give her. The other wants a slave to routine, to family life, to the things that can be planned and achieved. She says;

I’m a housewife and a prostitute, both of us living in the same body and doing battle with each other. The meeting of these two women is a game with serious

risks. A divine dance. When we meet, we are two divine energies, two universes colliding. If the meeting is not carried out with due reverence, one universe destroys the other. (153)

In the same profession, she has to perform the role of both house wife and the prostitute. But these two roles clash with each other. To maintain both roles at a same time is a risk as well as a divine dance. This means she has crossed the boundary of the normal woman who doesn't have both qualities at the same time. So Maria reaches the divine state by carrying energy of both house wife and prostitute. Otherwise one will destroy the other.

With passing time, Maria gets used to the life of prostitute. Instead of regretting what she is doing, she uses the same socially low graded profession as her medium to attain the fulfillment of her dream. Being in prostitution she comes to meet different faces of men and comes closer to the actual reality of life.

iii. The Ultimate Boon

The ultimate boon is the reward that the hero gets after getting victory in his voyage. This boon may be treasure, knowledge, experience, and other things that the hero in his adventure gains. Maria's meeting with the painter Ralf Hart brings in her a tiny hope of love. This is the ultimate boon that Maria has received which she is longing from her early young days. In this sense, Campbell has said that "The ease with which the adventure is here accomplished signifies that the hero is a superior man, a born king" (173). But in the case of this novel *Eleven Minutes*, the protagonist is not a born king rather she is a usual hero who has faced and encounter a number of tests and trials. Because of having bitter experiences of different affairs in her early young age, Maria has given up the hope of love. She feels that

Ralf Hart was in her thoughts from morning to night now, and for the first time she was able to feel from happy with an absent love although she slightly regretted having confessed her love, thus running the risk of losing everything.(173)

Maria is thinking about Ralf Hart all the time. Because this is the same person who germinates a seed of love and life that she has buried a long ago. She feels a kind of happiness even in his absent by only thinking about him. But she fears of losing her dream boy, her love. She is still confused to decide whether she has to confess her love or not. She doesn't want to lose her freedom to live life in her way as well as the freedom of Ralf Hart. She never tries to confess her love to this gentleman who loves her truly. She has compared the freedom of this man with that of freedom of a bird which can fly whenever it wants. However, she experiences that 'peace' when she has gone beyond her own limits with this gentleman, Ralf Hart.

After all the times she has spend with the people who come in Copacabana, she has reached the conclusion that sex has to be used as some kind of drug in order to escape the reality, to forget about the problem and to relax. This is a harmful and destructive practice. But she comes to discover that if sex is taken as a union of two soul like her and Ralf's relation, it is not harmful rather it is life enhancing and it will insecure the divine peace. The protagonist Maria admits that "If you live your life intensely, you experience pleasure all the time and don't feel the need for sex" (175). The life is not lived in under other's pressure. In this context, Campbell says that It is not that people live life meaningfully rather it is the experience that makes us feel alive. Therefore, one should live each and every moment life intensely without regretting what you have done wrong in order to experience the divine pleasure that is near to God. Maria, the protagonist of the novel, has done the same.

Ralf Hart, who is an intelligent man, gives Maria, knowledge about the history of prostitution. According to him, first history is like that of Maria:

... a pretty young girl, for reasons which she has chosen or which have chosen her, decides that the only way she can survive is by selling the body. Some ends up ruling nations, as Messalina did in Rome, other becomes legendary figures, like Madame du Barry, still others chose after adventure and misfortune, like the spy, Mata Hari. But the majority never have their moment of glory, are never faced by a great challenge: they will always be young girls from the interior in search of fame, a husband, adventure, but who end up discovering quite a different reality, into which they plunge for a time, and to which they become accustomed, always believing that they are in control and ultimately unable to do anything else. The other history is exactly the opposite: sacred prostitution. Sacred Prostitution? Earning money from sex and yet still able to approach God?(204-205)

Maria is a pretty young girl. Unlike other ordinary girl she wants to live her life in the way she wants. She wants to raise her standard above the standard of her parents. So, she has a dream to go abroad, work there and live a prosperous life. But unfortunately her dream is reversed. She is trapped in the net woven by the Swiss man. One day the situation has become so critical that she has to take daring decision of her life- whether it is better to accept prostitution to survive or become loser in foreign land. Being in unfamiliar world, she takes a risk and decides to go in prostitution to earn her living by selling her body. In this context, Ralf Hart has compared the life of Maria with the legendary figures of history like Messalina of Rome, Madame du Barry and Mata Hari. Majority of girls do not have moment of glory and are never faced by great challenge. Mostly young girls from the interior of

the Brazil who come there in search of fame, a husband, adventure, but they end up discovering quite a different reality. They become victim of new land. On the other hand, there is sacred prostitution-earning money from sex and also able to approach God. This is what Maria has done.

Maria, the major character of the novel, is now near to her destiny. Though she works as a prostitute she is successful to accumulate enough money. This is the very money that can buy her ticket to return Brazil as well as a farmland along with a good house. Maria feels a kind of victory like that of Buddha's victory of acquiring message of 'peace' which is for well being of humanity.

3. Return

The term 'Return' deals with the hero's return home (familiar world) from alien land power and boon that he has acquired along the way of the adventure. However having found the bliss and enlightenment in the other world, the hero of myth may or may not want to return to the familiar world(home) to bestow the knowledge and boon that he has gained onto the people of his community.

i. The crossing of the Return Threshold

In this stage of myth, the hero returns to the world of common day (ordinary world) from the alien world. The hero accepts the ordinary world as real. According to Joseph Campbell "The hero adventures out of the land we know into darkness; there he accomplished his adventure, or again is simply lost to us, imprisoned, or in danger; and his return is described as a coming back out of that yonder zone" (217). In this stage, the hero returns to the world of common day (ordinary world) from the alien world. This means, the coming out of the hero from the yonder zone (darkness) is described as the returning of the hero. While returning home, the hero, again, has to encounter the trials and ordeals in his returning journey. This is called the crossing of

returning threshold. The hero must be able to pass this threshold. After nine months, Maria involves in prostitution, and her quest has been fulfilled along with enough money to leave this strange country. She buys a ticket to Brazil. That described her return as a coming back out of that yonder zone of Switzerland into the known zone Brazil where she belongs to. One thing that strikes Maria is while crossing the threshold she doesn't want to caged Ralf, neither she suggest him to go with her. She thinks he is the only pure thing that had happened to her. Their relationship based on freedom, and no other sort of relation would work. Perhaps this is the only reason they both loved each other because they know they do not need each other to show their faithfulness towards love. Before Maria's return to Brazil she spends a night with Ralf Hart. In the morning, she left Ralf without informing him. To her surprise Ralf catches her in Paris airport where she has her transit.

It is like that Ralf is holding a bunch of roses, and his eyes were full of light that she had seen on that first day when he was painting her portrait while the cold wind outside had made her feel awkward to be sitting there. Ralf said Maria that "And to be utterly sure that this was what you wanted, that you were expecting me, that all the determination and will power in the rules of the game from one moment to the next. It's really easy being as romantic as people in the movies, don't you think?"(271). When Maria was young, she has a fascination with romantic love as seen in movie. She always dreams that her dream lover will come with bunches of roses. He will confess his love before her by offering roses. Unfortunately her young age dream was shattered because of bitter experience of different love affairs. So she never hopes that her dream will ever be fulfilled. Now, her dream is fulfilled by the love of Ralf Hart. She is happy to find Ralf Hart as her husband. On the other hand, she has enough

money to buy a farm in her hometown. Now she has her youth ahead of her and a great deal of experience of life with a great independence of her soul.

IV. Conclusion

Paulo Coelho is the well known author of Brazil. Unlike his varied and unusual protagonists, he has followed a dream (an artistic career) in a quest for fulfillment because his father wants him to become a professional lawyer who has both money and position in the society. As far as his works are concerned, most of them have either profound spiritual insight that comes from his own spiritual experiences (e.g. *The Pilgrimage*, *The Fifth Mountain*, etc.), or have quest journey that is similar to the hero of the myth (e.g. *The Alchemist*, *The Zahir* etc.). The present novel, *Eleven Minutes* depicts the journey of the protagonist, Maria, from her home town into the foreign land to accomplish her quest which is similar to the journey of the typical hero of the myth. She also fulfills the three stages of typical hero's acts- departure, initiation and return.

In the case of Maria, the limited life horizon of Brazil and Swiss tourist's promise of fame and fortune are responsible factor for her journey into the foreign country, Switzerland. As she receives a call to adventure from this Swiss gentleman, she is ready to cross the threshold boundary to carry out her adventure being unknown to the uncertain power and event of the unknown land. When she reaches there, she finds the reality more coarser than she has ever imagined. Being bold and courageous she is prepared to encounter and tackle each and every trials and tests that comes in her way because she doesn't want to miss the opportunity to fulfill her dream which she waits so eagerly. She further intends that "I can choose either to be a victim of the world or an adventurer in search of treasure" (39). Maria, in Switzerland, first work as a low paid bar dancer where the customers drink and applaud, blow kisses and privately make obscene gestures which she thinks is very disrespectful. She has no measure of

control of her own in this situation except doing what Swiss man wants. In the context of myth, this kind of world is compared with the belly of the whale where the hero is either, swallowed and later resurrected, or the hero may overcome and kill the enemy. But in the context of this novel, Maria, the heroine, is first swallowed by the desire of material prosperity and fame in such a new country. As she becomes familiar to this alien world, she tactfully comes out of that world by becoming victorious.

The desperate need of money for her survival in foreign land compels Maria to spend a night with an Arab man who gives her a thousand francs. A sense of freedom that she has in unfamiliar world is another factor for her involvement in prostitute. Now she decides to make some socially low graded profession as her means to fulfill her dream of fame and fortune. In this life she has to go through different challenges but she never bows down her head before any critical situation. Rather she is experimenting it by taking it as one phase of her life. While she was in this profession, she comes to realize a presence of role of both the 'innocent girl' and the 'understanding mother' in her single body. This realization is a kind of apotheosis where Maria reaches a divine state. When she is in this profession, she has given up the hope of love in her life. But the arrival of the painter, Ralf Hart, arouses within her a seed of love and wants to marry her.

After nine months of her involvement in prostitution, she has "... enough money to buy a farm, she had her youth a head of her, a great deal of experience of life and a great independence of soul" (271). This means her quest has been fulfilled along with enough money to leave this strange country and buy tickets to return Brazil. On the one hand, she has still her youth to live fully ahead of her. On the other hand, she has gained a vast knowledge about life through her own experiences which is the ultimate

boon that she has acquired from her journey. In this regard, her return is described as coming back out of that yonder zone of Brazil where she belongs to and where her family lives.

To sum up, Maria, the protagonist of the novel, *Eleven Minutes*, unlike the hero of mythical narratives fulfills three phases of typical hero's acts- departure, initiation, and return in her journey to accomplish her goal. In this text, Maria being very optimistic to complete her dream of fame and fortune departs from her country and enters into the foreign country, Switzerland.

Unfortunately, she has to choose the socially low graded profession of prostitute to accumulate a large sum of money so that she can change her dream into reality. When she earns enough money from prostitution she leaves this job and has union with Ralf Hart. Then she returns home as a grand mythical figure with heroic deeds, unique and adventurous. Thus, the work is based on quest (mythical journey and ordeal) with profound attainment through heroic deeds.