

I. Countercultural Sensibility in Coelho's *Eleven Minutes*

This research is an attempt to read Coelho's *Eleven Minutes* as a counter discourse to multiple discourses like patriarchal discourses, mainstream discourses on sex and sexuality, the role of capitalist strategies to make sex as an object of mystery hiding its reality and commercializing it for economic benefit, the ill-practices of genital mutilation to control the female sexuality and so on. The novel is very remarkable counter discourse to criticize the existing discourses about sex and an urge to rediscover it in new light. The novel also stresses on female will-power and freedom to explore the possibility of her life.

Naïve Brazilian girl Maria is able to break the barrier of existing mainstream discourses and explore her selfhood in sex. She starts her odyssey in ignorance and becomes an enlightened one finding the radiance of life by exploration of sex. The binarism between a prostitute and an angel has been subverted using fairytale style of narration beginning with "Once upon a time" (1) to tell the tale of modern day prostitution taken as a job by Maria and her attempt to break it free from commerciality and transcend it as meaningful and sacred activity. As a prostitute Maria is devoted to sex without emotion and passion as if it is a penance:

She doesn't want to go back to the club, she wants to go home, but she has to go back to hand over the fifty francs, and then there's another man, another cocktail, more questions about Brazil, a hotel, another shower . . . back to the bar where the owner takes his commission and tells her she can go, there aren't many customers tonight. She doesn't get a taxi, she walks the length of Rue de Berne, looking at the other clubs, at the shop windows full of clocks and watches, at the church on

the corner (closed, always closed ...) As usual, no one looks at her.(74-75)

Her miserable condition and mechanical job of prostitute exploited by the owner of the night-club of Rue de Berne and the indifference of the metropolitan, the forlorn mood and the desperate need for rest and company has been narrated by the writer. In this loneliness and indifference of the surrounding, she keeps her penance continued:

She walks through the cold. She isn't aware of the freezing temperatures, she doesn't cry, she doesn't think about the money she has earned, she is in a kind of trance. Some people were born to face life alone.' Then, in such condition she starts to discover herself; 'I'm not a body with a soul, I'm a soul that has a visible part called the body. (75)

Maria, a young girl from a remote village of Brazil, with innocent bruises with love failures at an early adolescent stage and hatred for love goes to seek her future in Switzerland, only to find that reality is a lot harder than she expected. After working in a nightclub as a samba dancer for a brief period, she realizes that this is not what she wants. After a heated discussion with her manager one night, she storms out and begins to look for a career in modeling. After a long unsuccessful search for a position in that field, and as she starts running out of money, she engages herself for 1000 francs for "one night" with an Arab man. Delighted with the easy money and after compromising with her soul she lands in a brothel on Rue de Berne, the heart of Geneva's red-light district.

In the brothel on Rue de Berne, Maria befriends Nyah, a Filipino prostitute, who gives her advice on her new profession and after learning the tricks of the trade from Milan, the brothel owner, she enters the job with her body and mind shutting all

doors for love and keeps her heart open only for her diary. Quickly she becomes quite successful and famous and her colleagues begin to envy her. Months pass and Maria grows into a professionally groomed prostitute who not only relaxes her clients' mind, but also calms their soul by talking to them about their problems.

Her world turns upside down when she meets Ralf, a young Swiss painter, who sees her "inner light". Maria falls in love with him immediately and begins to experience what true love is (according to the author, it is a sense of being for someone without actually possessing him). Maria is now torn between her sexual fantasies and true love for Ralf. Eventually she decides that it is time for her to leave Geneva with her memory of Ralf, because she realizes that they are worlds apart. But before leaving, she decides to rekindle the dead sexual fire in Ralf and learns from him about the nature of sacred Sex, sex which is mingled with true love and which involves the giving up of one's soul for the loved one.

This book explores the sacred nature of sex. "Eleven minutes" (88) refers to the time duration of sex. Also, it depicts two types of prostitution: prostitution for money and sacred prostitution. There are direct references to sadomasochism too. The story is of Maria's journey to find what true love is by letting her own life guide her. She enters a life that leads her down the path of sexual awakening and almost leads to her self-destruction when she is introduced to all sides of sexual experience. When she has given up hope to find true love, she finds her true "inner light" and her everlasting true love.

The novel is countercultural in the sense that the possibility of life has been sought in sex by its protagonist, Maria, going beyond the traditional mainstream discourses about love, sex, mass media, capitalism as they have concealed the essence of life. Sex can be sacred and lets the people to search for the inner light in them if it

is made sacred. But it has been profaned by the discursive construction of the notion of romantic love, commercialization of the sex erasing the practice of sacred sex with the advent of capitalism, deliberately constructing the discourse of psychoanalysis to normalize the female sexuality from male approaches and so on. Such discourses are countered by the bold female character Maria, who crosses the narrow barrier of Brazilian society, practices her freedom to think and act as per the situation demands discovering her self in sex. She is very similar to the Hippie of America of 1960s who are the major advocates of the American counterculture during that time rejecting the mainstream discourses and the ways of life.

The novel, *Eleven minutes*, depicts the strong-willed protagonist Maria with remarkable disposition practicing freedom to choose one's life. She leaves her native country Brazil full of optimism to find her love for life, a good husband and a happy family. But the life is not so easy for her. She gradually learns to survive doing a job of a prostitute in Switzerland. She is very critical of capitalism and patriarchy at times as she starts seeing through the constructed, derealized, commercialized discourses of the important aspects of life-sphere like love, sex and so on. So, she gradually learns how the traditional sex has ruined the people and how the disastrous consequences of such discursive practices can be reduced. Her rejection of the conventional discourses and search for the life in sex are very much similar to that of hippies, the frontrunners of American Counterculture. In this regard Richard Brownell explains:

Hippie was the term applied to anyone who had essentially rejected the conventional culture and lived life on his or her own terms. Hippies rejected capitalism and seldom held jobs except when it was absolutely necessary to obtain basic needs such as food and shelter. They believed in nonviolence, love, and community, and they often congregated in

groups called “communes,” in which responsibilities, possessions, and sometimes even sexual partners were shared. They maintained a relaxed view of life, and they did not trouble themselves with planning for the future. They lived in the moment. (44)

Thus, we see the striking similarity between Maria and the hippies of American society during the period of counterculture in America. Maria continually practices sex so as to make it useful to life going beyond its traditional discourses and charges the capitalist discourses for commercializing sex and derealizing the love. So, we can term her one of the ideal practitioners of counterculture.

Coelho’s writings serve as the counter-discourses to the dominant discourses of life and humanity and advocates for the better humane world protesting the existing and so-called modern discourses about the socio-cultural aspects of human existence. Coelho is not only one of the most widely read but also most influential writers in the world today, not only to our opinion but also in the opinion of numerous prize juries- in Germany, Italy, Poland, France, Spain, Ireland, Brazil, and Yugoslavia- that have honored Coelho with over a dozen international awards over the past several years. Before dedicating his life completely to literature, he worked as a theatre director and actor, lyricist and journalist. His novel, *The Alchemist*, published in 1988 became one of the best selling Brazilian books of all time. Coelho is also Messenger of Peace for the United Nations because of the humane sensibility in his writings.

Even though he is so famous writer some critics oppose his election to the Academy or the selection of his works as some of the best examples of contemporary Brazilian literature. Presumably, some of these critics simply disparage Coelho's narrative simplicity- a very powerful technique that he has continually mastered over the years. *The Alchemist*, for example, employs a fable like language that has won the

author recognition around the globe. He seldom uses complex allegories, metaphors, or idioms. All his work is simple, and his style captures not only the imagination but also the hearts of his readers. His message is also very simple and millennial: happiness lies in finding our-selves. Simply put, Paulo Coelho is an author in search of himself, a trait that epitomizes his literary truth. This Brazilian phenomenon, as he has come to be known for, has been very consistent not only in his personal quest but also in becoming one of the most important writers of our time - perhaps to his own mother's amazement, since she always discouraged him from taking up a profession that often offers very meager financial remuneration in countries like Brazil. It seems that the more he writes, the more he earns the acclaim of important critics, like Umberto Eco, and of an ever-increasing number of readers around the world. The sale of 100 million copies of his books in over 150 countries and in 71 languages places Coelho as the second most-read contemporary author, based on a poll taken by the French magazine *Lire* in 1999.

Since this research adopts counterculture as its theoretical framework to examine Coelho's novel *Eleven Minutes*, it is very assisting to clarify it a bit. Counterculture refers to the literary movement that has begun in America after World War II and it questions the dominant, traditional and canonical writings. In other words, counterculture is the production of counter discourses that challenge the established modes of discourses. Counterculture challenges the so-called canonic discourses and the traditional myths that define the particular social mode and try to hyper correct the modes of existence that go beyond the traditional modes of existence. Counterculture is, thus, cultural criticism that encompasses all the possible discourses and counter discourses raise the voice for the particular cultural group or against the dominant discourses and ideologies inherent in them advocating the need

of the new culture with the refutation of the old and established cultures. It is rooted to the vigorous anti-establishment and anti-traditional literary movements of the 1950s America such as Beat Generation, Black Mountain, New York School poets accelerated, questioning the cultural conformity and complacency and voicing the need of new culture that can include the voice of minorities into the mainstream literature. In his book *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, M.H. Abrams highlights the situation through which counterculture began. Abrams writes:

The 1950s while often regarded in retrospect as a period of cultural conformity and complacency, was marked by the emergence of vigorous anti-establishment and anti-traditional literary movement It was also a time of confessional poetry and the literature of extreme sexual candor, marked by the emergence of Henry Miller . . . and the writings of Norman Mailer, William Burroughs, and Vladimir Nabokov . . . , the counterculture of the 1960s and early 70s continued some of these modes, but in a fashion made extreme and fevered by the rebellious youth movement and the vehement and sometimes violent opposition to the war in Vietnam (209).

The situation of cultural conformity and complacency of the American society and the tendency of status quo in America paved the way for the development of vigorous anti-establishment, countercultural movement.

It became an attitude of the marginalized writers, youths and the protestors of the Vietnam War. It was mostly non-violent but it turned out to be violent sometimes. Abrams further sees the development of counterculture with the expression of the voice of 'minority' or ethnic literary group in literature. He writes:

Many of the most innovative and distinguished literary work of the latter decade of the twentieth century have been written by writers who are often identified, as belonging to one or another 'minority' or ethnic literary group, . . . there is, however, much contention, . . . whether it is more just an enlightening to consider such writes simply as part of the American mainstream or to stress the identity of each writer as a participant in an ethnic culture with its distinctive subject matter, themes, and formal features. (210)

Thus, we can see counterculture as the counter discourse of minority cultures that counter the monolithic, unitary discourse of culture as a whole. Counterculture resists the domination of minority voices by the mainstream canonical culture of unity and seeks to establish the discourses of diversity of multiple, heterogeneous cultural voices of the minority or ethnic groups.

Primarily, the culture used to be regarded as organic unity and the collection of the best values. It is highlighted with Arnold's definition of culture as the "best that has been taught and known in the world" (113). The idea of culture was monolithic and unifying in the past. It was elite and hegemonic as the 'best' as termed by Arnold is the 'best' from the perspective of the upper-class rather than the lower-class and marginalized groups.

Literature in past also became a political instrument to promote the unitary culture in the name of socializing of otherwise heterodox groups. It is further clarified by Gerald Graff and Bruce Robbins in their essay "Cultural Criticism" collected in *Redrawing the Boundaries*:

The preeminence accorded to literature reflected its promise as a political instrument for the socializing of otherwise heterodox groups .

. . . When late 19th century educators urged that English literature replace the classical languages at the centre of . . . curriculum, they were animated by the belief that the literature of the native tongue . . . was a superior means of acculturating the raw, uncultivated masses. . . . The campaign to replace Greek and Latin with English literature . . . seemed the perfect instrument for socializing a threateningly heterogeneous ethnic population into the values of Anglo-Saxon culture. (422)

It is for the imposition of the unified discourse of culture, the heterogeneous, ethnic, minority cultures are subdued. The tyranny of the monolithic idea of unified culture is, then, started to be challenged by various writers who advocated the heterogeneity of plural cultures and the democratic counter culture as antidote to the unified mainstream culture.

Graff and Robbins see the ambiguity in the concept of culture and trace the history of counterculture. They see the analysis of culture in Raymond Williams' *Culture and Society* as the analysis that traced the monolithic discourse of culture and Williams coupled the concept of culture with a critical standpoint that gives raise to the idea of counterculture. Graff and Robbins further write:

The emergence of the idea of culture as told by Williams in *Culture and Society* is the story of the making of a counterculture. Williams explains how the word culture appeared only as the organic way of life it denotes came to be threatened during the Industrial and French revolutions and how the word later came to serve, in the elaborations of the Romantics, Matthew Arnold, . . . George Orwell, and their

successors, as "a court of human appeal" against the divisions and fragmentations of industrial society. (XVIII)

Graff and Robbins quote Williams' concept of the culture that is the basis for the cultural criticism and counterculture. They agree with Williams and look out the critical development in the field of cultural criticism. It is because of such critical concept about the culture Williams has been awarded with the major cultural critic as the founder of cultural materialism. They cite the concept of culture as studied by Williams as "made into entity a positive body of achievements and habits, precisely to express a mode of living superior . . ." and show how the traditional concept of culture demarcate the boundary between superior culture and inferior one and how the concept of culture hegemonized the other minority cultures (XVIII). It is because of the discourse embodied upon the idea of the traditional culture the counter discourse or the critical concept of counterculture becomes necessary.

Paulo Coelho's *Eleven Minutes* has received numerous criticisms after it got published in English language in 2003. Margaret Jull Costa helped this book earn both appraisal and criticisms with the English translation of the novel. In the words of critic Paul Di Filippo, the novel depicts "sacred sex. A paradoxical, utopian impossibility or a life sustaining, attainable goal? This is the major question that underpins Paulo Coelho's new novel , *Eleven Minutes*, the tale of Maria, a naïve young woman from Brazil who becomes a high class prostitute in Switzerland" (4). Filippo finds the nature or rather unthought aspect of sex in human life. He finds the possibility of making sex holy even in the contaminated circumstances if the determination is firm.

The author himself justifies the countercultural political orientation and politics of identity in his writings in one of his interviews. Paulo Coelho avers, "My

literature is totally committed to a new political attitude: man in search of his own identity. It does not deal with the old and worn-out categories of right and left. There is a revolution that is slowly setting up, which the press doesn't seem to have detected yet" (58). Clarifying the identity politics of mankind and rejection of the traditional, dominant discourses of right or left in his writing, Coelho sums up the basic tenets of his writing. He furthers:

If I had to sum up the whole idea in only one expression, I'd say that the new political attitude for our era is to "die alive." In other words, being aware of and participating in things until the day we die—something that does not occur very often. People end up dying to the world on the day they renounce their dreams. After that, one departs on a journey as did Ulysses, accepting the challenges and knowing that sometimes one must fight alone, yet understanding he stands in for the entire human race. (58)

Coelho advocates for the human dignity and the nature of human struggle comparing the entire human race as the great hero Ulysses. The struggle for life has become harder in this era and the dominant traditional discourses have made it more difficult for a modern man. To show this difficulty, he chooses the important aspects of life like sex, social hierarchies, love and so on. The author justifies the idea of sex as discursive and need of knowing its discursivity and understanding the value of sex for humanity in an interview. He states:

We believe that there is standard for everything, and we believe too, that if we stick to that 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 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 root of aberrant behaviors, for example, pedophilia, incest and rape. Why do we behave in this way with something that is important?
(1-2)

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

Jacket studies the novel in association to self-discovery. In this regard, he examines; “In this odyssey of self-discovery, Maria has to 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 context of love” (2) he also finds the novel dealing with sex and the possibility of its piousness. He sees the novel as the odyssey of the protagonist, Maria and her rigorous questioning of the limit of the mechanical, commercial sex, he fails to see the countercultural aspect of the novel as Maria counters not only the discursive nature of sex rather she charges the discourses of patriarchy, romantic love, consumerism and genital mutilation. This research aims at exploring those countercultural discursive strands with attention to the details provided in the text in various contexts.

The present research work has been divided into three chapters. The first chapter fundamentally deals with introductory outline of the present study. It introduces critical review and the writer and her characters in relation to their context and countercultural tendency to reject the traditional discourses and search for the possibility going beyond the discourses with the highlight of the protagonist, Maria

and the writer of the novel. Thus it presents the bird's eye view of the entire research. The second chapter aims at providing the theoretical methodological reading of the text briefly with both the textual and theoretical evidences. It attempts to examine counterculture and its pivotal role to unravel the pros and cons of the traditional discourses and to possibilities to overcome the barriers set by them to the life. On the basis of theorists and analysts of counter discourses and counterculture, the novel will be analyzed in this chapter. It will further sort out some extracts from the text to prove the hypothesis of the research. This part serves as the core of the present research. The third chapter concludes the ideas put forward in the earlier chapter, focusing on the outcome of the entire research. The various logical conclusions will be summarized as the proof that the novel is a countercultural discourse highlighting the conclusion of the whole research.

II. Countercultural Discursive Strands in Coelho's *Eleven Minutes*

Brazilian writer Paulo Coelho's novel *Eleven Minutes* is the writer's attempt to revisit the domain of human sexuality and the significance of sex in human life to discover the divine self if it is practiced properly. But due to the invasion of the capitalism, media and the discursive practices in the society, the sacred nature of sex has been extinct and it has been commercialized. The society hides the reality about sex, capitalism exploits it imposing the tax on the sex-workers thereby making it an industry to gain revenue and the mass media has created the romantic notion of love concealing the facts about sex making it sinful, fascinating secret. So, the writer treats the issue of sex to counter various discourses which are at work in the society with different forms of power and interests embedded to them.

Richard Brownell writes about the American counterculture of the 1960s in his book *American Counterculture of the 1960s*, most of the mainstream discourses were challenged during that time. In his own words, "Within the counterculture, everything from clothing and hairstyles to views about sex, drugs, and religion was markedly different from the mainstream" (44). In the same manner, the writer sets the novel with a prostitute as a central character around whom the whole plot revolves. He uses this to counter various discourses- about women, about sex, about the condition of prostitution as a business, the nature of males, the discourse of love and marriage and so on. Dealing with sex, he attacks on the social attitude that sex is embarrassing secret which should be concealed and is able to rebut it as a sacred devotion leading a person to salvation.

Various countercultural discourses crisscross in Coelho's novel *Eleven Minutes*. First, the whole novel at once becomes countercultural discourse going beyond the traditional approach to sex. While talking about the approach of men

without understanding what sex is Ralf Hart, a famous painter and lover of Maria in Switzerland says that men are afraid and vulnerable when they approach sex. Sex is unreal while traditionally approaching it as sex has been only discursive and men practice it not to its depth but confirm to the discourses about it. Ralf Hart talks about the men approaching sex cowardly as traditional discursive practice talking to Maria as:

Worse than afraid, they were vulnerable. They didn't really know what they were doing, they only knew what society, friends and women themselves had told them was important. Sex, sex, sex, that's the basis of life, scream the advertisements, other people, films, books. No one knows what they're talking about. Since instinct is stronger than all of us, all they know is that it has to be done. And that's that. (260)

Here Ralf Hart charges the discourse formation of sex on the basis of advertisement, the conversation of people about sex, discussion of sex in films or books. The cowardice of males while approaching a female without understanding the female body has been, thus, clearly highlighted in the novel *Eleven Minutes*. The cause of fear in males while approaching a female body is due to the male ignorance about female body. This ignorance of the female body and sexuality is based on the discourse created by the media. It shows how the female sexuality has been neglected and controlled in the society. In his essay, "We 'Other Victorians'" collected in *Foucault Reader*, Michel Foucault talks about repression on discursive formation of sex and its reduction as he writes:

By placing the advent of the of the age of repression in the seventeenth century, after hundreds of years of open spaces and free expression, one adjusts it to coincide with the development of

capitalism: it becomes an integral part of the bourgeois order. The minor chronicle of sex and its trials is transposed into the ceremonious history of the modes of production; its trifling aspect fades from view. (294)

As the capitalistic discourses started to invade the society and sex started to be regarded as a mode of production, the repression of sex began according to Michel Foucault. The lost glory of free expression of sex, a sacred aspect of sex has been presented in the novel too as Michel Foucault studies it. Its repression systematically began according to the novel due to its commercialization or the advent of capitalism.

Ralf Hart confirms it as he says:

Prostitutes appear in classical texts, in Egyptian hieroglyphs, in Sumerian writings, in the Old and New Testament. But the profession only started to become organized in the sixth century B C, when a Greek legislator, Solon, set up state-controlled brothels and began imposing taxes on "the skin trade". Athenian businessmen were pleased because what was once prohibited became legal. The prostitutes, on the other hand, started to be classified according to how much tax they paid. (204-5)

The idea of practicing freedom is central to Foucault's exploration and analysis of the ethical practices of antiquity. It refers to the ways in which individuals in Antiquity were led to exercise power over themselves in the attempt to constitute or transform their identity and behavior in the light of specific goals. What interests Foucault about these ethical practices and ancient arts of existence is the kind of freedom they presuppose. He suggests that the freedom entailed in practicing the art of self-fashioning consists neither in resisting power nor in seeking to liberate the self from

regulation. Rather, it entails the active and conscious arrogation of the power of regulation by individuals for the purposes of ethical and aesthetic self-transformation.

In her reflections on Foucault's positive account of freedom, Sawicki notes that it offers a more affirmative alternative to his earlier emphasis on the reactive strategy of resistance to normalization. For the late Foucault, individuals are still understood to be shaped by their embeddedness in power relations, which means that their capacities for freedom and autonomous action are necessarily limited. However, he suggests that by actively deploying the techniques and models of self-formation that are "proposed, suggested, imposed" upon them by society as Foucault terms in his essay "The ethic of care for the self as a practice of freedom" (291), individuals may creatively transform themselves and in the process supplant the normalization operating in destructive modern technologies of the self. Moya Lloyd suggests that it is Foucault's earlier notion of genealogy as critique which allows us to distinguish between autonomous practices of the self and technologies of normalization.

For Lloyd, the Foucaultian practice of critique – a practice which involves the effort to recognize, decipher and problematize the ways in which the self is produced – generates possibilities for alternative practices of the self and, thus, for more autonomous experiments in self-formation. Lloyd explains that "it is not the activity of self-fashioning in itself that is crucial. It is the way in which that self-fashioning, *when allied to critique*, can produce sites of contestation over the meanings and contours of identity, and over the ways in which certain practices are mobilized" ("A Feminist Mapping of Foucauldian Politics" 250). With the introduction of a notion of freedom in his late work, Foucault also clarifies the normative grounds for his opposition to certain forms of power. In his discussion of ethics, Foucault suggests that individuals are not limited to reacting against power, but may alter power

relationships in ways that expand their possibilities for action. Thus, Foucault's work on ethics can be linked to his concern to counter domination, that is, forms of power that limit the possibilities for the autonomous development of the self's capacities. By distinguishing power relations that are mutable, flexible and reversible, from situations of domination in which resistance is foreclosed, Foucault seeks to encourage practices of liberty 'that will allow us to play ... games of power with as little domination as possible' ("The ethic of care for the self as a practice of freedom" 298).

Sawicki argues that Foucault's notion of practices of freedom has the potential to broaden our understanding of what it is to engage in emancipatory politics. In Foucault's conception of freedom as a practice aimed at minimizing domination, Sawicki discerns an implicit critique of traditional emancipatory politics which tends to conceive of liberty as a state free from every conceivable social constraint. Following Foucault, Sawicki argues that the problem with this notion of emancipation is that it does not go far enough: "Reversing power positions without altering relations of power is rarely liberating. Neither is it a sufficient condition of liberation to throw off the yoke of domination" ("Feminism, Foucault and "Subjects" of Power and Freedom" 102). If, as Foucault suggests, freedom exists only in being exercised and is, thus, a permanent struggle against what will otherwise be done to and for individuals, it is dangerous to imagine it as a state of being that can be guaranteed by laws and institutions. By insisting that liberation from domination is not enough to guarantee freedom, Foucault points to the importance of establishing new patterns of behavior, attitudes and cultural forms that work to empower the vulnerable and, in this way, to ensure that mutable relations of power do not congeal into states of domination. Thus, for Sawicki, the value of Foucault's late work for

feminism consists in the conceptual tools that it provides to think beyond traditional emancipatory theories and practices.

The freedom, ecstasy, divine communion and emancipation of sex from its constructed discourses and mankind through sex have been present in history as described by Ralf Hart as:

The Greek historian, Herodotus, wrote of Babylonia: They have a strange custom here, by which every woman born in Sumeria is obliged, at least once in her lifetime, to go to the temple of the goddess Ishtar and give her body to a stranger, as a symbol of hospitality and for a symbolic price. (206)

Ralf Hart, the lover of Maria who helps Maria to discover the sacred nature of sex and to restore Maria's virginity, discusses the historical, sacred aspects of sex beginning with the Herodotus' description of Babylonia and its custom of worshipping goddess Ishtar and giving the body to stranger to have sex. The body given to the stranger used to be regarded both as the symbol of hospitality and the symbolic price sacrificed for the goddess. The sex was thus, sacred activity in the ancient time but at present it has highly been commercialized due to the rise of consumer culture and capitalist discourses circulate in the society. Sex has lost its divinity in the modern time. Ralf Hart further continues describing the nature of sacred sex as:

The influence of the goddess Ishtar spread throughout the Middle East, as far as Sardinia, Sicily and the Mediterranean ports. Later, during the Roman Empire' another goddess, Vesta, demanded total virginity or total surrender. In order to keep the sacred fire burning, the women serving her temple were responsible for initiating young men and kings on the path of sexuality - they sang erotic hymns, entered trance-like

states and gave their ecstasy to the universe in a kind of communion with the divinity. (206)

Ralf Hart sees sex as the sacred fire burning in the body and the body as the temple. The women, serving her temple, needed to initiate the men into the holy path of the sexuality and leading them to the sacred communion and ecstasy. Hart's observation traces the history of sexuality up to the time of Herodotus as Foucault analyzes it but he seems unaware of the causes in full-fledge why it changed the course. He both shows his lament and unawareness about the extinction of the sacred sex as he further says:

No one knows why sacred prostitution disappeared, since it had lasted not centuries, perhaps, but for at least millennia. Maybe it was disease or because society changed its rules when it changed religions.

Anyway, it no longer exists, and will never exist again; nowadays, men control the world, and the term serves only to create a stigma, and any woman who steps out of line is automatically dubbed a prostitute.

(207)

Though Ralf Hart is ignorant of the causes of the extinction of the sacred sex from the culture, Foucault studies the cause of this situation as the reproduction, repression and exploitation of the sex. As we see from it from Foucaultian lens, the repression of sex is the outcome of the rise of consumer culture and commercialism. Foucault observes that the sexual activity has been exploited with the advent of capitalism as the female body has been regarded as the laborer. Foucault goes on to clarify:

A principle of explanation emerges after the fact: if sex is so rigorously repressed, this is because it is incompatible with a general and intensive work imperative. At a time when labor capacity was being

systematically exploited, how could this capacity be allowed to dissipate itself in pleasurable pursuits, except in those— reduced to minimum – that enabled to reproduce itself? Sex and its effects are perhaps not so easily deciphered; on the other hand, their repression, the thus reconstructed, is easily analyzed. (294)

By exploiting the female body as the labor force the sex has been exploited and the exploitation was given the normative validity with the production of various discourses reconstructing the sex with the constructed discourses. Foucault charges the capitalist thrust in the realm of sex with the discourses about it which hide the reality about sex purporting it and subjugating it:

The notion of repressed sex is not, therefore, only a theoretical matter. The affirmation of a sexuality that has never been more rigorously subjugated than during the age of hypocritical, bustling, and responsible bourgeoisie is coupled with the grandiloquence of a discourse purporting to reveal the truth about sex, modify its economy within reality, subvert law that governs it, and change its future. (296)

In the works of his middle years like *Discipline and Punish* and *The History of Sexuality, Vol. 1*, Foucault traces the emergence of some of the practices, concepts, forms of knowledge, social institutions and techniques of government which have contributed to shaping modern European culture. He calls the method of historical analysis he employs ‘genealogical’. Genealogy is a form of critical history in the sense that it attempts a diagnosis of “the present time, and of what we are, in this very moment” in order “to question ... what is postulated as self-evident ... to dissipate what is familiar and accepted” (*Politics, Philosophy, Culture: Interviews and Other Writings* 265). What distinguishes genealogical analysis from traditional

historiography is that it is “a form of history which can account for the constitution of knowledges, discourses, domains of objects etc. without having to make reference to a subject which is either transcendental in relation to the field of events or runs in its empty sameness throughout history” (*Michel Foucault: Power/Knowledge* 149).

Rather than assuming that the movement of history can be explained by the intentions and aims of individual actors, genealogy investigates the complex and shifting network of relations between power, knowledge and the body which produce historically specific forms of subjectivity. Foucault links his genealogical studies to a modality of social critique which he describes as a “critical ontology of the present” (50) that is seen with Maria in Switzerland as a sex-worker in Rue de Berne and continually reflects critically to her present job as a sex worker there. In a late paper, Foucault explains that ontology of the present involves “an analysis of the historical limits that are imposed on us” in order to create the space for “an experiment with the possibility of going beyond them” (*The Foucault Reader* 50). Thus, genealogy is a form of social critique that seeks to determine possibilities for social change and ethical transformation of ourselves. Maria is finally able to experiment the possibility of going beyond her space of being a prostitute and eventually executing her plan to buy a home and a farm returning Brazil.

Maria’s odyssey to the self-discovery and ethical change with the shattering of her long accepted discourse of ideal family finding a good husband, the lifetime love and the erotic fulfillment at once leads her to explore the modern world. She ends up sleeping with an Arab man for one thousand francs in Switzerland and working as a prostitute in a brothel on Rue de Berne, the heart of Geneva's red-light district. Her quest affirms the constructed discourse of romantic love that is countered with her experiences about sex and love. Anthony Giddens clarifies the discursivity embedded

to the emotions associated with sexuality as seen with Maria leading her to the self discovery as:

Given the strength of the emotions associated with sexuality, it is scarcely surprising that erotic involvements become a focal point for such self-disclosure. The transition to modern forms of erotic relations is generally thought to be associated with the formation of an ethos of romantic love . . . (122)

The discourse of erotic love, as suggested by Giddens is responsible for the degradation of the erotic relation to this stage. Romantic love and its discourses are represented in the media and the sex becomes the secret, valuable and profitable for the capitalists who regard sex as the mode of production. The discourse of ideal of romantic love is aptly described by Lawrence Stone in the following way:

the notion that there is only one person in the world with whom one can unite at all levels; the personality of that person is so idealized that the normal faults and follies of human nature disappear from view; love is like a thunderbolt and strikes at first sight; love is the most important thing in the world, to which all other considerations, particularly material ones, should be sacrificed; and lastly, the giving of full rein to personal emotions is admirable, no matter how exaggerated and absurd the resulting conduct might appear to others.(282)

The discourses of romantic love have, thus, constructed human beings and their feelings devoid of ordinary, human faults and follies. This discourse of romantic love is, thus, responsible for the emotions associated with physical nearness and sexuality

because it creates the distance between the human feelings and the real sex. Maria's emotion in her romantic love with a boy in her school days has been narrated as:

Maria, who hated studying and whose only other distraction in life was television, began to wish that the days would pass quickly; she waited eagerly for each journey to school and, unlike other girls her age, she found the weekends deadly dull. Given that the hours pass more slowly for a child than for an adult, she suffered greatly and found the days far too long simply because they allowed her only ten minutes to be with the love of her life and thousands of hours to spend thinking about him, imagining how good it would be if they could talk.

(2)

She questions her present with the experience of the love frequently in Foucaultian sense and soon the gradual revelation of the nature of love that unfurls before her counters the earlier discourse she is following about love. Her notion of love was the discourse promoted by TV and media and due to this; the emotions and the reality were not matched in any way. Discourses kept the reality of love covered and she had to work out to uncover them only to shatter the discourses she had possessed so long. We see the discursive formation of love and kiss and deliberate covering the sex from love. While following the discourse of love as promoted by media, she could not understand the sexual invitation of her boyfriend. Her dating and kiss with her second boyfriend were the correction of her mistakes she made with her first boyfriend who had gone away from her because she did not know how to respond him. Still, she could not reach to sex this time because she was ignorant to understand him. Her first kiss and the notion of her romantic love are narrated as:

Her first kiss! How she had dreamed of that moment! And the landscape was special too - the herons flying, the sunset, the wild beauty of that semi-arid region, the sound of distant music. Maria pretended to draw back, but then she embraced him and repeated what she had seen so often on the cinema, in magazines and on TV: she rubbed her lips against his with some violence, moving her head from side to side, half-rhythmic, half-frenzied. Now and then, she felt the boy's tongue touch her teeth and thought it felt delicious. Then suddenly he stopped kissing her and asked: 'Don't you want to?' (8)

The discursive formation in the media that women become happy in the role of wife, mother or finding the unreal love as per the discourse of media construct was the major thrust that prepared the women of America for counterculture in the latter half of twentieth century. Richard Brownell underscores this fact about the American counterculture in his book *American Counterculture of the 1960s* that fits properly in the case of Maria:

One problem that had been unearthed . . . was the issue of women's place in America. It had been widely assumed for generations that women were most satisfied in the role of wife and mother, and advertising, television and film, books, and magazines reinforced this view. This view was so pervasive that some medical professionals believed that women who insisted on having careers ran the risk of wrecking their marriage or raising children who would become social or sexual deviants. (36)

Maria attempts to discover her identity looking at the problem on the views of the medical professionals of the time, subverts them and wants to find her true love and

career earning some money from prostitution leaving her family back in Brazil which can aptly be termed a social or sexual deviant. But it is the only way to understand how the women are working as the sex toys to the males without the want of orgasm and sexual pleasure. Thus, her journey to understand the life by the means of sex is unconventional and counter discursive to subvert the patriarchal, heterosexual discourses.

For Maria, women can have her agency if she is able to counter the patriarchal discourse embedded with the very core of Christianity which is the foundation of the western culture. She counters the patriarchal interpretation of the nature of the sin Eve committed while eating the apple in the Garden of Eden before the fall with the radical feminist approach. She sees original sin of Eve is not to eat the apple but her sense that she must share it to Adam, the male. Sharing the feelings of females to the males is thus, the basis for the males to construct the discourses to limit them and rob their freedom and agency. She thinks; “Original sin was not the apple that Eve ate, it was her belief that Adam needed to share precisely the thing she had tasted. Eve was afraid to follow her path without someone to help her, and so she wanted to share what she was feeling” (210). It is because a female wants a company of male in her most of the important actions; she becomes a sinner because of this on the basis of her actions shared with the male as they know her weaknesses and start dominating her. She becomes stereotyped as a weak, coward and passive and her freedom is interpreted by male so as to gain authority over her.

The male authority of the time is responsible for such interpretation to appropriate the freedom of females. This power exercised by the males is the ‘juridico-discursive’ power that males legalize their discourses to hegemonize the females as we see it from Foucaultian genealogical perspective.

One of the central threads of Foucault's genealogy of the present is an analysis of the transformations in the nature and functioning of power which mark the transition to modern society. Foucault's genealogy of modern power challenges the commonly held assumption that power is an essentially negative, repressive force that operates purely through the mechanisms of law, taboo and censorship. According to Foucault, this 'juridico-discursive' conception of power (Foucault 1978: 82) has its origins in the practices of power characteristic of pre-modern societies. In such societies, he claims, power was centralized and coordinated by a sovereign authority who exercised absolute control over the population through the threat or open display of violence. From the seventeenth century onwards, however, as the growth and care of populations increasingly became the primary concerns of the state, new mechanisms of power emerged which centered around the administration and management of 'life'.

Maria counters the male power and authority with the celebration of female autonomy and the free will of not sharing certain things with males or not being completely possessed by them. Doing so, Maria is able to rebut the traditional discourse of love as the total surrender of female to the male and radicalizes it. She goes on to clarify:

Certain things cannot be shared. Nor can we be afraid of the oceans into which we plunge of our own free will; fear cramps everyone's style. Man goes through hell in order to understand this. Love one another, but let's not try to possess one another. I love this man sitting before me now, because I do not possess him and he does not possess me. We are free in our mutual surrender; I need to repeat this dozens, hundreds, millions of time, until I finally believe my own words. (211)

So, for Maria, there should be gender equity in the concept of love on the basis of mutual surrender. She, thus, discards the traditional discourses of love as monolithic patriarchal discourses constructed to appropriate the female domination. She also counters the notion that the males are masculine, mechanical and only want to have sex for eleven minutes to satiate their sexual desires per day paying huge amount of money to the prostitutes as she narrated:

She thinks about the other prostitutes who work with her. She thinks about her mother and her friends. They all believe that man feels desire for only eleven minutes a day, and that they'll pay a fortune for it. That's not true; a man is also a woman; he wants to find someone, to give meaning to his life. (211)

She also stresses understanding the desires of males and attempt to fulfill their lack is necessary countering the discourse that male only want to have sex with females eleven minutes per day. General women including the housewives and the prostitutes are responsible for the construction of such discourses and they never attempt to understand what their male counterparts really want. She further challenges the discourse of masculinity and asserts the presence of feminine quality and lack in the male too.

She is critical of the women who do not question their existence in relation to the sexual pleasure they get from the males rather they pretend to be satisfied with them. She critically reflects the condition of her mother and the condition of Brazilian women who never enjoyed the sex and only became the possession of males to provide them the sexual pleasure annihilating their own desires. She reflects the condition of being a Brazilian woman as:

Does her mother behave just as she does and pretend to have an orgasm with her father? Or in the interior of Brazil, is it still forbidden for a woman to take pleasure in sex? She knows so little of life and love, and now - with her eyes blindfolded and with all the time in the world, she is discovering the origin of everything, and everything begins where and how she would like it to have begun. (211)

She questions the origin of everything and tries to locate the female self in the history of the nominal position of the women in respect to the sexual pleasure. She counters the marginal position of female in terms of sexual discrimination and the male attitude to control the female sexuality for the pleasure of men. The apathy of the males towards the female pleasure in sex is clarified when Heidi, Maria's friend and librarian in Switzerland talks about the recent invention or discovery of clitoris with Maria when she goes to library to return the book she had borrowed from the library:

'You'd be horrified too. Did you know, for example, that the clitoris is a recent invention?'

An invention? Recent? Just this week someone had touched hers, as if it had always been there and as if those hands knew the terrain they were exploring well, despite the total darkness. (222)

Clitoris is the part of female genital that enhances the quality of sexual pleasure during intercourse. If male had been conscious about the sexual pleasure of the women, they would discover it long ago. The recent discovery of clitoris in the twentieth century suggests that female had always lived their life in negligence of the males about their body. When Heidi talks about this, Maria thinks about her lover Ralph who had been able to teach Maria about the passion and pleasure of sex patiently exploring her body in darkness, and touching her clitoris. But the condition

sexual pleasure of other women was very miserable as their sexuality had been controlled by the males and used for their own pleasure. To control the sexuality of women, males have constructed various discourses about it and they cut a layer from woman genital organ so that they never enjoy the sex and live with the same husband being subservient to him in Africa and some other parts of the world. This male discourse devised to make woman as a sex slave has been strongly countered as Maria reflects on what Heidi, the librarian, continues:

'Its "discovery" didn't mean it received any more respect, though.' The librarian seemed to have become an expert on clitorology, or whatever that science is called. 'The mutilations we read about now in certain African tribes, who still insist on removing the woman's right to sexual pleasure, are nothing new. In the nineteenth century, here in Europe, they were still performing operations to remove it, in the belief that in that small, insignificant part of the female anatomy lay the root of hysteria, epilepsy, adulterous tendencies and sterility.' (223)

The genital mutilation has been criticized as it embeds the male power exercised over the female body cutting off the joy of sex from them. To exercise the power and gain control over the female body, they have constructed discourses that clitoris is the root of hysteria, epilepsy, adulterous tendencies and sterility.

Fran Hosken also charges the practice of genital mutilation. She sees that the goal of this practice is “to mutilate the sexual pleasure and satisfaction of woman” (11). This, in turn, leads her to claim the woman’s sexuality is controlled, as is her reproductive potential. According to Hosken, “male sexual politics” (14) in Africa and around the world “share the same political goal: to assure female dependence and subservience by any and all means” (14). Physical violence against women (rape,

sexual assault, excision, infibulations, etc.) is thus carried out “with an astonishing consensus among men in the world” (14). The implicit message of the genital mutilation is that the women are defined consistently as the victims of male control, the sexually oppressed. Thus, raising voice against the male violence and the control over female sexuality with genital mutilation is the counter discourse to the patriarchal discourse and the insensitivity and apathy of the males towards the female body and sexuality. The librarian reflects the oppression the females face in their sexual relation with their husband so vividly that it strongly counters the male domination to the females:

Men would always go looking for novelty; they were still the troglodyte hunter, obeying the reproductive instinct of the human race. And what about women? In her personal experience, the desire to have a good orgasm with one's partner lasted only for the first few years; then the frequency of orgasms diminished, but no one talked about it, because every woman thought it was her problem alone. And so they lied, pretending that they found their husband's desire to make love every night oppressive. And by lying, they left other women feeling worried. (247-48)

It is because men do not care about the pleasure of female in sexual activities; she gradually loses her interest on the oppressive sex. She thinks the lack of interest her personal problem and she is compelled to lie that she is satisfied. There is no sharing of problem among other women. Then, instead of sorting out the problem, she attempts to forget sex and rather concentrate to the family service. Heidi continues to reflect this:

They turned their thoughts to other things: children, cooking, timetables, housework, bills to pay, their husband's affairs - which they tolerated - holidays abroad during which they were more concerned with their children than with themselves, their complicity, or even love, but no sex. (248)

Heidi's remark about the behaviors of males shows how the males are indifferent to the biological need of sex. They limit their role as the payers of the bills, guardians to the children and by doing so they neglect the sexual desires of the wives on the one hand and maintain the superiority over them, on the other. Thus, the hegemonic patriarchal discourses are countered with the highlights of the sexual sufferings of females. Further, the discourse of heterosexual marriage and its relevance is rigorously questioned.

Maria works the whole year as a prostitute following only the dull routine to please the customers letting them penetrate her without gaining pleasure in sex. She has been narrated; "She had had only four adventures - being a dancer in a cabaret, learning French, working as a prostitute and falling hopelessly in love. How many people can boast of experiencing so much excitement in one year" (235)? As a prostitute she worked under Milan, the owner of Copacabana, a nightclub in the red light area of Rue de Berne. She describes her employer as:

Milan was a respectable married man, concerned for his reputation and the good name of his club. He continued explaining the ritual: after dancing, they would return to the table, and the customer, as if he were saying something highly original, would invite her to go back to his hotel with him. The normal price was three hundred and fifty francs, of which fifty francs went to Milan, for the hire of the table (a trick to

avoid any future legal complications and accusations of exploiting sex for financial gain). (69-70)

Milan, the employer, thus gains the money from the business of flesh of the women who work for him. The act of sexual intercourse is a ritual in his club and the customers would pay three hundred and fifty francs. He teaches his new employees the terms and the nature of job. Maria learns the rules of working from other Brazilian prostitute on the first day of her job; 'Look, it's very simple, you just have to stick to three basic rules. First: never fall in love with anyone you work with or have sex with. Second: don't believe any promises and always get paid up front. Third: don't use drugs' (68). Then she starts working under Milan, who always keeps eyes to his employees in case they break the rules. He is a panoptic controller of what goes in his club and his employees.

Peter Barry in *An Introduction to Literary and Cultural Theory* relating Foucault with his study of prison describes Foucault:

Whose pervasive image of the state is that of 'panoptic' (meaning 'all seeing') surveillance. The panopticon was a design for a circular prison . . . which could all be surveyed by a single warder positioned at the center of the circle. The panoptic state, however, maintains its surveillance not by physical force and intimidation, but by the power of its 'discursive practices' . . . which circulates its ideology throughout the body politic. (175-6)

The owner of the nightclub, Milan, is panoptic surveillant who keeps eyes on the prostitutes, using his discursive power that he is very strict and decent. He permits his employees, the prostitutes, to attend the customers in the bar by drinking and dancing only for forty-five minutes and then, they need to take the customers to hotel room

and entertain them with sex. The panoptic position of the owner of the nightclub is very much similar to the Foucaultian study of the circular prison as the panoptic controller Milan needs the payment within certain allocated timing. Otherwise, the job turns out to be in jeopardy. Such discourses of strict regulation and timing circulate the capitalist ideology embedded to the body politic.

The title of the novel itself is borrowed from the traditional discourse about sex that the time duration of sex is only eleven minutes as Maria is told while working as a prostitute that ‘the amount of time spent actually having sex is about eleven minutes’ (88) and the traditional understanding and discourses about sex and sexual pleasure has been countered. The sex has become a pathological issue in the present time. It is degraded as a mechanical act which is very serious problem for the well-being of humanity as a whole and this is as hazardous as the terrible problems like the destruction of the Ozone layer. But nobody has turned serious attention to this serious problem. The sex as practiced in present time has been described as problematic:

Something was very wrong with civilization, and it wasn't the destruction of the Amazon rainforest or the ozone layer, the death of the panda, cigarettes, carcinogenic foodstuffs or prison conditions, as the newspapers would have it.

It was precisely the thing she was working with: sex. (88)

The mainstream humanity does not think seriously about the serious problems like sex and does nothing to find permanent solution to them. The females are enslaved by males only because of those eleven minutes of sexual contact and ‘The world revolved around something that only took eleven minutes’ (88) that is very ironical predicament of the humanity at present. The males and the patriarchal discourse have been attacked after presenting the irony in the functioning of the world charging men

marrying for the eleven minutes of sexual pleasure as she says, “because of those eleven minutes in any one twenty four-hour day . . . they got married, supported a family, put up with screaming kids, thought up ridiculous excuses to justify getting home late, ogled dozens. . . .” (88) Thus, the males of the society are challenged for the unreal life they are living for the suppression of females. She further ironizes them as:

. . . they would like to go for a walk around Lake Geneva, bought expensive clothes for themselves and even more expensive clothes for their wives, paid prostitutes to try to give them what they were missing, and thus sustained a vast industry of cosmetics, diet foods, exercise, pornography and power, and yet when they got together with other men, contrary to popular belief, they never talked about women. They talked about jobs, money and sport. (88)

The sex has been the basis for males to marry and confine the women inside the home. They never actually try to understand the problems of their wives. They never talk about women seriously. As Richard Brownell writes in *American Counterculture of the 1960s* about American counterculture and its need for female due to their awareness that they are not happy in marriage as:

One problem that had been unearthed . . . was the issue of women’s place in America. It had been widely assumed for generations that women were most satisfied in the role of wife and mother, and advertising, television and film, books, and magazines reinforced this view. This view was so pervasive that some medical professionals believed that women who insisted on having careers ran the risk of

wrecking their marriage or raising children who would become social or sexual deviants. (36)

Thus, the doubt in the traditional marriage as it became the hurdle to their career and robbed them of their freedom, which generated the pressure on them to redefine the marriage institution as a whole and create countercultural practices. Similar necessity has been voiced by Maria casting radical doubt to redefine sexuality, and remodel it in such a way that it does not only confine under the clutch of the males rather it become pleasurable and full of freedom for them. In American conterculture also, according to Brownell, “Many women in otherwise happy marriages were not satisfied with their lives as the popular culture at the time suggested. They wanted more out of life than cooking, cleaning, and sending the kids off to school” (36).

In her book *The Feminine Mystique*, Betty Friedan gives voice to American countercultural consciousness in female and advocates for the need of crossing the barrier of female marginality forming the female counterculture in 1963. She observes about counterculture as; “For the first time in their history women are becoming aware of an identity crisis in their own lives ... [that] will not end until they ... turn an unknown corner and make of themselves and their lives the new image that so many women now so desperately need” (79).

Friedan herself became the inspirational force to motivate the countercultural sensibility in American females and an activist as Brownell notes:

Friedan encouraged women to find work that was fulfilling and could help them to establish their identity. Her book became required reading for the emerging feminist movement, a movement she helped advance when she cofounded the National Organization for Women (NOW) in 1966. NOW was dedicated to creating better job opportunities, better

wages, and fostering independence of thought and action among women. (36-37)

The consciousness of 'independence of thought' as Friedan advocates is found in Maria in Coelho's novel *Eleven Minutes*. She struggles for the 'better job opportunities' in alien territory and ends up working as a prostitute. Still, she does not remain as a prostitute more than a year and when she leaves the job, she has already found the all the possible manifestation of sex. She has grown with sex and its reality and eventually an enlightened woman discovering the inner light in her and the sacred nature of sex. She counters the mainstream discourse about prostitution and goes beyond it to see through its limit and the possibilities of life.

As Brownell relates the women of counterculture as; "Many women in otherwise happy marriages were not satisfied with their lives as the popular culture at the time suggested. They wanted more out of life than cooking, cleaning, and sending the kids off to school" (36), Heidi, the widow librarian in Switzerland, expresses her unhappiness towards the boring family life. She comes to find what a futile life she spent with her husband as she reads a book about sex as Maria demands her to add the books about the sex in the shelf of her library. She shows her dissatisfaction with traditional marriage and sexual dissatisfaction with Maria as:

I don't know if I should have read all those things! Perhaps it would have been better to live in ignorance, believing that a faithful husband, an apartment with a view of the lake, three children and a job in the public sector were all that a woman could hope for. Now, ever since you arrived, and since I read the first book, I'm obsessed with what my life has become. Is everyone the same? (242)

Thus, her dissatisfaction is not only her but it is the plight of most of the household women. She strongly wants the pitiable condition to change. She mercilessly questions the patriarchal approach to sex which is indifferent to the understanding about the female body and negligent to the sexual pleasure of the wives during sexual intercourse. She questions her husband in respect to her sexual pleasure as:

But why is it that my husband never noticed my clitoris? He assumed that the orgasm happened in the vagina, and I found it really; really difficult to pretend something that he imagined I must be feeling. Of course, I did experience pleasure, but a different kind of pleasure. It was only when the friction was on the upper part . . . (242)

Thus, she counters the patriarchal discourses about the sex and sexual pleasure showing her sexual dissatisfaction in traditional mainstream sex. Her view about sex is remarkably different from the mainstream as Brownell clarifies about the American counterculture as; “Within the counterculture, everything from clothing and hairstyles to views about sex, drugs, and religion was markedly different from the mainstream” (44).

Heidi counters the patriarchal tendency of even the psychoanalysis of Sigmund Freud too because of his belief that female sexual pleasure lies in her vagina. First, she relates Maria that the sexual pleasure lies in clitoris and G-spot; “There are lots of nerve endings that connect the clitoris and the G-spot and which are crucial to orgasm. But men think that penetration is all” (243). She credits some Italian scientist for renovating the quality of female sexual pleasure with the discovery of clitoris and G-spot in twentieth century that highlights how patriarchal approach to the female body deprived them of the sexual pleasure for many millennia. She criticizes Freud for his ignorance about female sexuality and sexual pleasure as he does not agree to the idea that female sexual pleasure concentrates on the clitoris and G-spot:

Dr Freud didn't agree because he wasn't a woman and, since he experienced his orgasm through his penis, he felt that women must, therefore, experience pleasure in their vagina. We've got to go back to basics, to what has always

given us pleasure: the clitoris and the G-spot! Very few women enjoy a satisfactory sexual relationship, so if you have difficulty in getting the pleasure you deserve, let me suggest something: change position. Make your lover lie down and you stay on top; your clitoris will strike his body harder and you - not he - will be getting the stimulus you need. Or, rather, the stimulus you deserve! (243-44)

Thus, charging the patriarchal discourse of Freudian psychoanalysis, Heidi encourages Maria to be a revolutionary woman enjoying sex as much as her male counterpart enjoys it. She wants her to adopt all the possible positions for sex until she is not satisfied. She terms this time as 'revolutionary times' (243) in which female are started to be paid attention and their pleasure started to be thought. Thus, this novel is the counter discourse to the Freudian psychoanalytic discourse as it believes in vaginal pleasure for female in sex. It is too conservative to preserve the same phallogocentric tradition and patriarchal hegemony.

Thus, it is clear that Coelho uses the protagonist Maria, who is full of beat sensibility to counter the dominant discourses of the society like capitalism, phallogocentrism, genital mutilation, commercialization and derealization of sex. She travels from Brazil to Switzerland in the quest for true love finally coming to realize the evils of patriarchy and capitalism that are responsible for the romanticization and derealization of love. She works as a sex worker in Geneva, enlightens with the knowledge of the annihilation of female pleasure in sex and strongly counters the capitalist and phallogocentric construction of sexuality. So, she criticizes the dominant discourses of capitalism, media and patriarchy as the messiah of the countercultural, beat sensibility emphasizing on the new culture based on the free will and freedom on the actions of the females around the world. She counters the male indifference to the female sexuality with an attempt to inspire new revolutionary feminine self.

III. Valorization of Countercultural Sentiment

Various countercultural discursive strands have been analyzed in Coelho's novel *Eleven Minutes* so far. In the analysis of the novel from the countercultural viewpoint, we see the novel participating in the tradition of counterculture as it subverts the traditional and dominant discourses of the Brazilian society. While subverting the dominant discourses it advocates for the free will and beat attitude on the part of woman by the means of the protagonist Maria.

Maria, a naïve Brazilian girl, crosses the social barrier of the poor Brazilian third world in the quest of the love of her life. She advocates for the free will and one's freedom to explore the life. In the odyssey of her quest of love and life she comes to understand how love is derealized by capitalism and mass media like TV, films and so on romanticizing it and concealing its true essence. Later, she understands the more evils of capitalism working as sex-worker in Switzerland such as the commercialization of sex and the derealization of its life force. Due to the invasion of the capitalism, media and the discursive practices in the society, the sacred nature of sex has been extinct and it has been commercialized. The society hides the reality about sex, the capitalism exploits it imposing the tax on the sex-workers thereby making it an industry to gain revenue and the mass media has created the romantic notion of love concealing the facts about sex making it sinful, fascinating secret. So, the novel becomes the strong counter discourse challenging the capitalist discourse and attempts to unravel the sacred nature of sex. It is due to the derealization of sex, the life has become unpleasant and the desire has become insatiate in the modern people.

As Richard Brownell writes about the American counterculture of 1960s in his book *American Counterculture of the 1960s*, most of the mainstream discourses were

challenged during that time; the dominant discourses like discourses of patriarchy, capitalism, gender discrimination, sexuality and genital mutilation come under strong criticism in the novel. So, the protagonist Maria becomes the strong countercultural voice and the novel becomes strong countercultural literature. Like the liberal attitude of beat generation towards sex, drugs, and religion, Maria approaches sex as the life force and explores its abuses and distortion and historicizes its sacred nature.

Maria criticizes the male desire to control the female body and never lets her body be possessed even by her lover Ralf. Patriarchal discourse has been strongly countered and the counter is extended to explore how sexuality has been governed by patriarchal discourses how the sacred sex has been commodified and commercialized. Genital mutilation and other patriarchal discourses that exclude the female sexuality and pleasure have come under attack. While exploring the sex, she counters and subverts the discourses of vaginal orgasm in females and underscores the strong need of understanding of female body and her sexual pleasure on the part of male partner. Thus, the novel is written with countercultural sensibility as it counters multiple strands of dominant discourse.

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