

1: Existence, Struggle and Survival

Existence

Existence is the state of fact of being real or living a life style. It is also a way of living especially in a difficult or boring situation. People are struggling for their survival so they are existing in the society, which is also known as existence. The meanings of the word, 'existence' have been given in the different ways by the various people and the dictionaries. Their main aim of giving meaning to the word is the independent consciousness and it is the opposite of non-existence. According to *Merriam Webster Dictionary*, the meaning of existence is: "The state or fact of having being especially independently of human consciousness and as contrasted with nonexistence" (253). Thus, it says that existence is independent and human conscious. The meaning of the word, 'existence' has been given in the different ways by the various people and the dictionaries. Their main aim of giving meaning to the very word it is the independent consciousness and it is the opposite of non-existence.

The world is not fully fit for everyone. Human beings are fateful creatures. They have to face various problems in the world. Sometimes, the struggle may not work and the people fall in further problems. They like to move from one place to another for that. Eventually, they realize that whatever is given to them and whatever they can, they should do without being pessimistic. Many philosophers like Plato and Aristotle define the existence in their own way. However, their main idea is that the human beings should go ahead facing with the challenges whatever problems come on the way.

Similarly, in common usage, existence in the world one is being aware or conscious of oneself one's senses. It is related to ontology, the philosophical study of the nature of being, existence or reality in general, as well as of the basic categories of

beings and their relations. Traditionally listed as a part of the major branch of philosophy known as metaphysics, ontology deals with questions concerning what entities exist or can be said to exist and how such entities can be grouped, related within a hierarchy, and subdivided according to similarities and differences.

Epistemology studies criteria of truth, defining 'primary truths' inherently accepted in the investigation of knowledge. The first is existence. It is inherent in every analysis.

Its self-evident, a priori nature cannot be consistently doubted, since a person objecting to existence according to some standard of proof must implicitly accept the standard's existence as a premise.

Life is a characteristic of its objects that have self-sustaining biological processes from those that do not—either because such functions have ceased (death), or else because they lack such functions and are classified as inanimate. In the course of fighting with the existence, the individual's starting point is characterized by what has been called a sense of disorientation and confusion in the face of an apparently meaningless or absurd world. In fact, the world is absurd and meaningless for the human beings. They have to adjust with it at any cost. This is the essence of life and the existence. However, the life is full of struggle. Life is not what the world leads one. Everyone has to find out meaning of life whatever adverse situation comes in one's life. Maria, in the same manner, decides to proceed her life significantly. She realizes that life is what one perceives and tries to adjust life in terms of the circumstances.

The pioneer of the existential theory, Søren Kierkegaard is generally considered to have been the first existentialist philosopher, though he himself did not use the term Existentialism. He proposed that each individual—not society or religion—is solely responsible for giving meaning to life and living it passionately

and sincerely. Existentialism became popular in the years following World War II, and strongly influenced many disciplines besides philosophy, including theology, drama, art, literature, and psychology.

Existentialism, therefore, interprets human being as an isolated individual existence into an alien universe. It faces the doctrine that human being is a manifestation of absolute truth. Especially after the Second World War, many thinkers started to support this doctrine and they did not believe in traditional concepts like rationality, morality, unity, value, and even Christianity. The certainties and scientific reasoning that ruled the nineteenth century smashed into anxiety, absurdity disintegration, chaos, and uncertainty. Gaarder remarks on existence referring to Kierkegaard's determination about individuality:

According to Kierkegaard rather than searching for the Truth with capital 'T' it is more important to find the kind of truths that are meaningful to the individual's life. It is important to the 'truth for me'. He thus sets the individual, or each and every man, up against the 'system'. (379)

As he says, the absolute truth is unattainable but to find it in the individual is good idea for everyone. Any truth or fact is not universal or common but it is personal how a person perceives. In this way, the world is object and one. People may have individual understanding about it.

Kierkegaard emphasizes the individual choice at a moment. Most of the existentialists follow him in this respect. He thinks that man makes free decisions and choices to project himself. Taking example of Kierkegaard, Ellmann and Fiedelson remark:

By choosing even by choosing wrongly it that is done with earnestness

and struggle, we became new selves that could not have existed until the choice was made. [Choice in relation to God] Beyond ethical choice religious concept is the use of freedom to surrender it back to divine giver. (805)

Thus, one cannot remain without making decisions. By making decisions, he goes on establishing his existence. There are two options for the individual to choose: either he has to choose God and get redemption from the angst, an ethic-religious choice or he has to respect God and go to prediction, and atheistic choice.

Kierkegaard believes that one is free to make choices. And one exists up to the point of making choice. The concept of 'subjective truth' is dominant in his writings. Any systems, rules and regulations cannot determine an individual and his freedom. Instead of single truth, there are many truths which are personal. What is right and what is wrong depends upon one's own decisions and thoughts. These are traits that very ordinary people develop over time. People who see a wrong and decide to right it regardless of how long or how hard they have to work; people who refuse to let go of an idea or a dream even when others call them foolish; people who spend endless days and nights developing a God-given talent; and people who risk their lives, even die, basic human dignity: these are extraordinary people. They are not born that way, they become that way. Each of them was confronted with a difficult and terrible situation. Each of them found a way to overcome and triumph. There were ordinary people who refused to be undermined by the present problems and difficulty instead, fought for life with all their might. Among them is Maria who tries to find her position and existence in adversity. The life is short and struggling, how much life one lives, it should be meaningful, she means to say.

The existentialists are mainly influenced by the subjectivism and individuality.

By challenging traditional ideas about absolute being, they stress on human existence.

The possibility of human existence is the anticipation, the expectation and the projection of the future. Existence is always stretched out towards the future.

Existentialism has become one of the prominent theories at present and is applied in many literary texts. Although existentialists have many similar ideas, their view-points are conflicting and sometimes contradictory and it can be divided into two groups: theistic existentialists and atheistic existentialists. The first group of existentialists like Soren Kierkegaard, Karl Jaspers, Martin Butter, and Gabriel Marcel believe on religion and view that anxiety of modern man can be relieved when one dedicates oneself to the will of God. Friedrich Nietzsche, Martin Heidegger, Jean Paul Sartre, and Albert Camus belong to the second group of Existentialists who denies accepting the existence of God. For them, nobody is there to support human being. So, one is free to choose.

The nineteenth century Danish philosopher and religious thinker Kierkegaard is the first writer to call himself existentialist. He was infuriated by Hegel's philosophy which stressed on rationalism which according to Kierkegaard: "both the idealism of Romantics and Hegel's historicism 'obscured the individual's responsibility for his own life'" (Gaarder, 377). Therefore, Kierkegaard's through that Hegel and Romantics were "tarred with the same brush" (Gaarder, 377).

The centrality of individual passion in contrast to the passion of the 'Crowd' as Kierkegaard called, or Dostoevsky's "an ant in an ant heap" us one of the basic concepts of existential philosophers (Ellmann and Fiedelson, 803). Kierkegaard believes that one is free to make choices. And one exists up to the point of making choice. The concept of 'subjective truth' is dominant in his writings. Any systems, rules and regulations cannot determine an individual and his freedom. Instead of

single truth, there are many truths which are personal. What is right and what is wrong depend upon one's own decisions and thoughts.

Tragic optimism, the part of existentialism, is the concept that a person is genuinely optimistic even in the face of extremely negative circumstances. In logotherapy, this is represented with the 'tragic triad' which consists of pain; guilt and death. Each element of the tragic triad provides a motivation that can produce immense grief. However, logotherapy does not regard humans as simply animals prone to a given stimulus-response mentality. An optimistic mindset allows people the opportunity to turn suffering into achievement, improve oneself, and act to take responsibility. This must be an authentic choice actively pursued by an individual in the midst of tragedy. One of the pioneers of the existential theory, Jean Paul Sartre regards existence as humanism because it focuses on the human struggle and the effect on them.

Similarly, Jean-Paul Sartre relates existence to humanism. In *Existentialism is a Humanism*, he presents an accessible description of existentialism. A key idea of existentialism—and of the human condition—is that existence precedes essence. . That means, before having the consciousness of existence essence of being human is required. The essence of something is its meaning, its intended purpose. A paper cutter is made to cut paper; that is its point. Humans, however, do not have an essence. Man exists, turns up, appears on the scene, and, only afterwards, defines himself. He says: "the essence of man precedes his historically primitive existence in nature" (22).

He says that man is nothing else but what he makes of himself. Human beings have choice, they have subjectivity, and they choose what they will make themselves to be; they are entirely responsible for their existence. Thus, existentialism's first

move is to make every man aware of what he is and to make the full responsibility of his existence rests on him. He further opines that the thoughts are often not easily accepted. "Subjectivity" (53) is a word that riles up many. He argues:

Our responsibility is thus much greater than we might have supposed, because it concerns all mankind. If I am a worker and I choose to join a Christian trade union rather than to become a Communist, and if, by that membership, I choose to signify that resignation is, after all, the most suitable solution for man, and that the kingdom of man is not on this earth, I am not committing myself alone-I am choosing to be resigned on behalf of all- consequently my action commits all mankind. (24)

Thus, he implies that our responsibility is a blessing and a curse. It leads us to feel things like anguish, forlornness, and despair.

Struggle

Struggle is a laborious activity. It tries very hard to do something when it is difficult or when there is a lot of problem. Struggle is also a fight against somebody or something in order to prevent a bad situation to result. For Kierkegaard existence emerges as a philosophical problem in the struggle to think the paradoxical presence of God; for Nietzsche it is found in the reverberations of the phrase "God is dead," in the challenge of nihilism. Nietzsche sought to draw the consequences of the death of God, the collapse of any theistic support for morality. Nietzsche's overriding concern is to find a way to take the measure of human life in the modern world. Nietzsche's idea that behind moral prescriptions lies nothing but "will to power" undermined that authority.

Kierkegaard developed this problem in the context of his radical approach to

Christian faith; Nietzsche did so in light of his thesis of the death of God. Subsequent existential thought reflects this difference: while some writers (Sartre and Beauvoir) were stubbornly atheist in outlook, others (Heidegger, Jaspers, Marcel, and Buber) variously explored the implications of the concept “authentic existence” for religious consciousness. Though neither Nietzsche's nor Kierkegaard's thought can be reduced to a single strand, both took an interest in what Kierkegaard termed “the single individual.” Both were convinced that this singularity, what is most my own, “me,” could be meaningfully reflected upon while yet, precisely because of its singularity, remaining invisible to traditional philosophy, with its emphasis either on what follows unerring objective laws of nature or else conforms to the universal standards of moral reason. A focus on existence thus led, in both, to unique textual strategies quite alien to the philosophy of their time and ours.

Sartre's slogan “existence precedes essence,” (58) may serve to introduce what is most distinctive of existentialism, namely, the idea that no general, non-formal account of what it means to be human can be given, since that meaning is decided in and through existing itself. Existence is “self-making-in-a-situation” (Fackenheim, 37). In contrast to other entities, whose essential properties are fixed by the kind of entities they are, what is essential to a human being—what makes her who she is—is not fixed by her type but by what she makes of herself, who she becomes. The fundamental contribution of existential thought lies in the idea that one's identity is constituted neither by nature nor by culture, since to “exist” is precisely to constitute such an identity. It is in light of this idea that key existential notions such as facticity, transcendence, alienation, and authenticity must be understood.

Similarly, Facticity includes all those properties that third-person investigation can establish about natural properties such as weight, height, and skin color, social

facts such as race, class, and nationality and psychological properties such as web of belief, desires, and character traits; historical facts. It is manifest in moods as a kind of burden, the weight of having to be. This is what existential philosophers call 'transcendence.'

Transcendence refers to that attitude toward characteristic of practical engagement in the world, the agent's perspective. An agent is oriented by the task at hand as something to be brought about through its own will or agency. Such orientation does not take itself as a theme but loses itself in what is to be done. Thereby, things present themselves not as indifferent givens, facts, but as meaningful: salient, expedient, obstructive, and so on. To speak of 'transcendence' here is to indicate that the agent 'goes beyond' what simply is toward what can be: the factual always emerges in light of the possible.

Survival

Survival means something managing to continue or exist in spite of difficult circumstances. For the survival people make a lot of effort. It is supposed that the world is not fit for us but we have to adjust with it as it is. There are some views on it. In the first place, the world itself is not brought into being through projects; it retains its otherness and thus can come forth as utterly alien. In the second place, the world includes other people, and as a consequence that merely the revealer of the world but something revealed in the projects of those others. Thus, function of the projects, but is also a matter of 'being-for-others.' Sartre brings out this form of alienation in his famous analysis of 'the Look.' Finally, the self-understanding, or project, thanks to which the world is there for a meaningful way, already belongs to that world, derives from it, from the tradition or society. Though it is the engagement in the world alienates from authentic possibility.

The norm of authenticity refers to a kind of 'transparency' with regard to situation, a recognition that a being who can be responsible for identity. The light of this norm, which, can be said to recover from alienation and absorption that characterizes everyday engagement in the world. Authenticity thus indicates a certain kind of integrity. Authenticity defines a condition on self-making. Thus to be authentic can also be thought as a way of being autonomous. The inauthentic person, in contrast, merely occupies such a role, and may do so 'irresolutely' without commitment. Thus, existentialism's focus on authenticity leads to a distinctive stance toward ethics and value-theory generally. The possibility of authenticity is a mark of my freedom, and it is through freedom that existentialism approaches questions of value, leading to many of its most recognizable doctrines.

Existential theory did not develop much in the way of a normative ethics. However, a certain approach to the theory of value and to moral psychology, deriving from the idea of existence as self-making in situation, are distinctive marks of the existentialist tradition. In value theory, existentialists tend to emphasize the conventionality or groundlessness of values, their 'ideality,' the fact that they arise entirely through the projects of human beings against the background of an otherwise meaningless and indifferent world. Existential moral psychology emphasizes human freedom and focuses on the sources of mendacity, self-deception, and hypocrisy in moral consciousness. The familiar existential themes of anxiety, nothingness, and the absurd must be understood in this context. At the same time, there is deep concern to foster an authentic stance toward the human, groundless, values without which no project is possible, a concern that gets expressed in the notions of 'engagement' and 'commitment.'

In anxiety, as in fear grasps as threatened or as vulnerable, but unlike fear,

anxiety has no direct object, there is nothing in the world that is threatening. This is because anxiety pulls altogether out of the circuit of projects. As Heidegger puts it, anxiety testifies to a kind of 'existential solipsism.' The experience of anxiety also yields the existential theme of the absurd.

Another remarkable theme of existentialism is boredom or anxiety. This sense of anguish comes from the consciousness of individual's existence. When an individual realizes his existence, he finds himself in despair and he is suffering from dissatisfaction and anxiety. This dark and forbidding picture of dread leads to the anxiety but it is necessary to be in dread. Therefore, it is an optimistic philosophy even it is full of boredom and sense of dread. Absurdity also plays a vital role in existentialist philosophy. To exist as a human being is totally absurd. This world is meaningless and purposeless. In other words, the meaning of existence is itself meaningless and purposeless for absurdist thinkers like Camus.

In nutshell, on the existential view to understand what a human being is, it is not enough to know all the truths that natural science could tell us. The non-reductive dualist is no better off in this regard than is the physicalist. Nor will it suffice to adopt the point of view of practice and add categories drawn from moral theory: neither scientific nor moral inquiry can fully capture what it is that makes. Without denying the validity of scientific categories, governed by the norms of truth, or moral categories, governed by norms of the good and the right, existentialism may be defined as the philosophical theory which holds that a further set of categories, governed by the norm of authenticity, is necessary to grasp human existence. To approach existentialism in this categorical way may seem to conceal what is often taken to be its heart, namely, its character as a gesture of protest against academic philosophy, its anti-system sensibility. But while it is true that the major existential

philosophers wrote with a passion and urgency rather uncommon in our own time, and while the idea that philosophy cannot be practiced in the disinterested manner of an objective science is indeed central to existentialism, it is equally true that all the themes popularly associated with existentialism: dread, boredom, alienation, the absurd, freedom, commitment, nothingness, and so on, find their philosophical significance in the context of the search for a new categorical framework, together with its governing norm.

Thus, the novel revolves around the existential theory. The world is not fit for everyone from every aspect but we should adjust with it. Keeping all these things in mind, the researcher will write theoretical modality in the chapter second. All the related theories will be presented in the theory. In conclusion, the researcher will prove statement of the problems mentioned in the thesis proposal. Main tenets of the whole thesis will be summarized in the chapter followed by works cited. Everyone does a lot of effort for the existentialism. Struggle for life is one of the prominent features of human beings. These struggles have effect on the people that they think several alternatives thereafter.

2. Kierkegaard's Perspective on Struggle for Existence

Existential Theory

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Thus, one cannot remain without making decisions. By making decisions, he goes on establishing his existence. There are two options for the individual to choose: either he has to choose God and get redemption from the angst, an ethic-religious choice or he has to respect God and go to prediction, atheistic choice.

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Existential concept has become one of the prominent theories at present and is applied in many literary texts. Although existentialists have many similar ideas, their view-points are conflicting and sometimes contradictory and it can be divided into two groups: theistic existentialists and atheistic existentialists. The first group of existentialists like Soren Kierkegaard, Karl Jaspers, Martin Butter, and Gabriel Marcel believe on religion and view that anxiety of modern man can be relieved when one dedicates oneself to the will of God. Friedrich Nietzsche, Martin Heidegger, Jean Paul Sartre, and Albert Camus belong to the second group of Existentialists who deny accepting the existence of God. For them, nobody is there to support human being. So, one is free to choose.

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Kierkegaard sees clearly that it is only by adopting a bifocal perspective that we could manage to see ourselves as we truly are. In simple terms, he objects to holding a view of our thoughts and actions in ways that could only satisfy the philosophers and scientists rather than our own experience of existence. Although considered by many as the author of modern existentialism, Kierkegaard is in fact continuing on a tradition, which could trace its roots back to Pascal, Aquinas and Socrates in the West and to some elements of Taoism and Buddhism in the East.

These spiritual leaders and religious and philosophical ideas all considered the questions surrounding existence to be fundamental to our development as individuals and communities. Interest was directed at *being*, which really refers to how we understand what it is to live our lives in this world where nothing can ever be known or predicted with total certitude, and where we will eventually cease to exist. It is this last condition of human being which existential philosophy has had much to say about, and it may be argued that this has led some to criticize it for what seems like a morbid and excessive interest death. However, before looking more closely at this, it may be useful to draw out the key philosophical ideas normally associated with existentialism.

According to Kierkegaard, existential theory is the name that describes a number of closely related and similar philosophies. The prime concern of existential philosophy is to seek to attain an understanding of the human condition, 'as it manifests itself in our concrete, lived situations'. Attention is directed at considering our physical dimension and also our experience of freedom, joy and suffering and our reactions to these and other elements of our lives.

Kierkegaard in his book *Repetition and Philosophical Crumbs* talks about the life which is necessary to have repetition. For him, recollection's love is the only happy love. Repetition's love is in truth the only happy love. Like recollection, it is not disturbed by hope nor by the marvellous anxiety of discovery, neither, however, doesn't have the sorrow of recollection. It has instead the blissful security of the moment. Hope is new attire, stiff and starched and splendid. He says:

Still, since it has not yet been tried on, one does not know whether it will suit one, or whether it will fit. Recollection is discarded clothing which, however lovely it might be, no longer suits one because one has

outgrown it. Repetition is clothing that never becomes worn, that fits snugly and comfortably, that neither pulls nor hangs too loosely. Hope is a pretty girl, who slips away from one's grasp. (42)

The main essence of existential theory is to find the life struggling, doing futile task everyday and doing the repetitive tasks which have fewer meanings. One goes on fighting with the life whether he or she knows or not. Recollection is the consoling thing but it does not help in life to lead the life successfully, as Kierkegaard asserts.

Kierkegaard further asserts and categorizes 'recollection' as a beautiful older woman who never quite suits the moment. Repetition is a beloved wife of whom one never tires because it is only the new of which one tires. One never tires of the old, and when one has it before oneself one is happy, and only a person who does not delude himself that repetition ought to be something new, for then he tires of it, is genuinely happy. It requires youthfulness to hope and youthfulness to recollect, but it requires courage to will repetition. He who will only hope is cowardly. He who wants only to recollect is a voluptuary. However, he who wills repetition, he is a man, and the more emphatically he has endeavored to understand what this means, the deeper he is as a human being. But he who does not grasp that life is repetition and that this is the beauty of life, has condemned himself and deserves nothing better than what will happen to him — death. Hope is an enticing fruit that fails to satisfy, recollection sorrowful sustenance that fails to satisfy. But repetition is the daily bread that satisfies through blessing. When one has circumnavigated existence, then it will become apparent whether one has the courage to understand that life is repetition and the desire to look forward to this. He who has not circumnavigated life before he has begun to live will never really live. He who circumnavigated life but became sated has a poor constitution. He who chooses repetition, he lives. He does not chase after

butterflies like a child, or stand on tiptoe in order to glimpse the wonders of the world. He knows them. Neither does he sit like an old woman and spin on the spinning wheel of recollection. He goes calmly about his life, happy in repetition. What would life be without repetition? Who would want to be a tablet on which life wrote something new every moment, or a memorial to something past? Who would want to be moved by the fleeting, the new, that is always effeminately diverting the soul? If God Himself had not willed repetition, there would never have been a world. He would either have followed the easy plans of hope, or recalled everything and preserved it in recollection. He did not do this. This is the reason there is a world. The world consists of repetition. He further says about repetition:

Repetition is actuality and the earnestness of existence. He who wills repetition is genuinely mature. This is my *Separat-Votum*,¹ that means in addition that life's earnestness is in no way to sit on the sofa and pick one's teeth — to be something such as, for example, Private opinion, a titular counsellor, or to have a dignified walk — and be somebody such as His Reverence, just as little as it is life's earnestness to be the royal riding-master. Such things are in my eyes only jokes, and as such, sometimes bad jokes. (45)

Moreover, for him recollection's love is the only happy love, according to an author who, to the best of my knowledge, is sometimes deceitful, not in such a way, however, that he says one thing and thinks something else, but in that he develops a thought to such an extreme that if it is not grasped with the same energy, it will appear in the next moment to be something else. This claim is presented by him in such a way that one is easily tempted to agree and thus to forget that the claim itself is an expression of the deepest melancholy.

About Kierkegaard, Robert Ferguson says that he fears with the example by Kierkegaard because of two reasons. They are:

First, a thinker of such intense complexity, who made paradox his trademark, is not easily reduced to the eight pithy life lessons this book contains without gross simplification. Second, forming part of a series published by *The School of Life* (part of *Alain de Botton's* crusade to bring us Religion for Atheists), I suspected that the religious kernel of Kierkegaard's worldview might be ignored or viewed as irrelevant. (<http://blogs.lse.ac.uk>)

He comments that Kierkegaard's use of complex and trademark language having quite difficult to understand and simplify. On the other hand, Kierkegaard is indifferent about religious concept.

On the other hand, Michael Watts says that Kierkegaard is amazing and outstanding philosopher as well as frustrating and depressing. He is known as the father of existentialism. He remarks:

Soren Kierkegaard is an amazing, insightful, and fascinating philosopher. He's also a frustrating, depressing, and difficult philosopher — all at the same time. He is regarded by most, as the 'father of existentialism', despite the fact that the word wouldn't be coined for decades to come; yet for all his influence, he is understood surprisingly little outside of academic circles. This is a situation that really deserves to be corrected. (<http://atheism.about.com>)

Existentialists generally accept that natural science approaches based on the philosophy of logical positivism and materialism can provide useful accounts of the physical aspects of life but are incapable of saying anything worthwhile about the emotional life of the individual. The solution they advocate is to emphasize that

human beings are not just objects or things in nature and that they exist in a 'total, indissoluble unity or interrelationship of the individual and his or her world'. This can be understood to mean that the person and their world are inseparable and therefore to view the person apart from the world, or indeed the world apart from the person, is impossibility.

The existentialists refer to this as co-constitutionality; to view the person one has to view their world simultaneously. Or put another way, any attempt to study humans as if they were pure matter or pure mind is an abstraction and as such, can never get close to the reality of how our lives and the events in them are truly lived and present themselves to us. This leads onto a further distinction which existential philosophy has called situated freedom. This refers to the belief that as the world is always influencing the person and the person is constantly engaged in shaping their own life, absolute free will and its opposite, total determinism is impossible. This places existential philosophy alongside the major theistic religions of the world but out of step with the dominant philosophical views over the last 300 years. Both the Judeo-Christian traditions and the earlier existentialist philosophers have consistently taught that freedom is real and that not to acknowledge this, as have philosophers such as Comte and Locke, results in abstract systems of philosophy that do not stand up to the ultimate test of providing a truthful and recognizable account of our everyday life.

Existential philosophy postulates that the best way to understand human nature is to investigate it as it presents itself to us in everyday life, rather than through the lens of particular theories. Existentialism suggests that the focus should be on understanding those things that are unique to human beings and which separate us from every other creature. For example, they argue that philosophy and psychology

should direct their efforts at understanding choice, love, responsibility and an awareness of our own mortality. These and other similar experiences can only be understood in any meaningful way by going to those closest to the lived experience, that is, the individual as they find themselves in the particular situation. The aim is to access what something means to the person who has experienced the event, and crucially to achieve this without encouraging any pre-reflection or looking for a natural explanation. This relates to what May has called the natural attitude and is closely associated with scientism, which refers to the tendency to look for cause and effect relationships in all circumstances.

Existential philosophy is more accurately described as a range of philosophies each of which share a number of key concerns. Before looking at some of the different approaches in existential philosophy, it is important to briefly describe the elements that feature most strongly in existentialism as a whole. Existential philosophy is primarily interested in efforts directed at understanding what it means to be a human being. Whilst almost all philosophies would claim to share this focus in some way or other, the particular interest of the existentialist philosopher is aimed at discovering what it means to exist as a human being at its most basic level. In other words, they are attempting to approach and understand our lives as they are lived by each one of us directly and immediately.

Existential philosophy, thus, is directed at questions of a deep and personally significant level such as, what does it mean for us to be aware of our own mortality, is freedom fully attainable or a mere illusion, and are we responsible for our actions or is this governed by our genes, environment and fate? Existential philosophy has concerned itself with the distinction between existence and essence. These terms relate to how much freedom we have in establishing the basics of what it is to be a

human being. The debate centers on the idea that there is such a thing as human nature and human being, which is distinct from that of all other creatures, and whether this is by and large a fixed and universal phenomenon or an open-ended and continually evolving project.

Existential philosophy can be conceived as a reaction against other philosophical approaches, which assume that a purely logical, rational and systematic study is the best way to proceed in order to understand issues such as truth, knowledge and the other traditional concerns of philosophy. The existentialists reject any view that regards humans as objects or things and they reject the tenets of naturalism, which sees human beings as just one other animal amongst all others in the world. Existential philosophy accepts that we have much in common with other living creatures, however it argues that a special place be reserved for humankind because we are aware that we are aware! Another way of expressing this is that the existentialist perspective argues that only the human person is fully conscious of themselves (i.e. capable of self-consciousness) and that they alone of all living things on the planet, are able to reflect on their own projects for the future, present or past.

Existentialism lays particular emphasis on the fact that we are alone in being aware that we must ultimately die and that this unavoidable condition, which faces us all as individuals, is the most important point of our existence. According to the existential philosophers, that people at certain points in history and within their personal lives try to forget about or ignore this fact, does not diminish its centrality in understanding the human experience and ourselves. Indeed the existentialists are united in portraying the failure of people and societies to face up to the questions associated with an awareness of our mortality as deeply worrying and a sign of a profound imbalance in our mental outlook. In relation to this, most existential

philosophers stress that philosophy should remain open to a consideration of the spirit and the transcendental dimension in human existence. They are not claiming that philosophy must move into the area where the great spiritual and religious traditions operate, and neither do they feel it appropriate to engage in debates normally within the preserve of theology. However, they are highlighting in their view, any philosophy worthy of the name should have something to say on those aspects that are most unique to humankind. That this includes a consideration of topics that other philosophies often ignore makes their task even more necessary. For example, questions around love, freedom, whether there is meaning in our lives or meaninglessness, the necessity of choice and the degree of responsibility for our actions represent the main areas of interest. That each of these according to existential philosophy, provides a great challenge in terms of understanding because of their fundamentally ambiguous nature does not lessen the need to try to grasp their meaning for our lives.

Criticism on Kierkegaard

Charles, E. Moore says that Søren Kierkegaard has been accused of being one of the most frustrating authors to read. He has also been praised as one of the most rewarding. Frustrating, because his style is so dense, his thought so complex, and his words so harsh. Rewarding, because embedded within his writings and journals are metaphors and truths so deep and vivid. He argues:

Kierkegaard is not one to be read lightly, lest you get burned. The purpose of this collection is twofold. The first is to make Kierkegaard accessible. Even for the brightest, Kierkegaard is tough going. Walter Lowrie, Kierkegaard's most devoted biographer, writes: "Kierkegaard exacts of his reader a very great effort. (8)

Moore, further assert that Kierkegaard declines to make things easy for him by presenting a 'conclusion,' and he obliges him, therefore, to approach the goal by the same difficult path he himself has trod. Even Kierkegaard's fellow Danes found him difficult. This is unfortunate. Contained within his writings are some of the richest, most illuminating passages on faith and commitment ever penned? To help unearth some of these treasures, I have taken the liberty to abridge lengthy pieces, paraphrase complex passages, and tighten and simplify convoluted constructions. Secondly, this collection is meant to present in as concise a way as possible the 'heart' of Kierkegaard. By heart I mean first those pieces that are concerned with the core themes of his prolific output, second, those that exemplify the essence of his thought, and last but not least, his passion.

Moreover, Moore says that Kierkegaard writes industriously and rapidly, and under a variety of pen-names, presenting various esthetic, ethical, and religious viewpoints on life. His writings display such a wide range of genre and style, and his thought covers such a variety of subjects that even he himself felt compelled to write a book to explain his agenda. Despite this, Kierkegaard was single mindedly driven. He writes in his Journal: "The category for my undertaking is: to make people aware of what is essentially Christian" (9).

He categorizes Kierkegaard's work in two categories. First, Kierkegaard aims to make us aware. "I have worked for a restlessness oriented toward inward deepening. My whole life is an epigram calculated to make people aware" (10). In short, Kierkegaard's task is not the introduction of new ideas, a theology or philosophy of life. Rather, he says "My task is in the service of truth; and its essential form is obedience" (10). Kierkegaard is fundamentally existential that to keep people awake, in order that religion may not again become an indolent habit. His aim is to

provoke the individual so as to become an individual in the truth. Moreover Kierkegaard wants to do is to leave his reader the same – intellectually enlightened yet inwardly unchanged. Early in his life, Kierkegaard makes the discovery that one must find a truth which is true – the idea for which he can live and die. Part of the human predicament was that we are all interested in far too many things and thus are not decidedly committed to any one thing. As he writes in his Journal:

What I really lack is to be clear in my mind what I am to do, not what I am to know, except in so far as a certain understanding must precede every action. The thing is to understand myself, to see what God really wishes *me* to do...What good would it do me if the truth stood before me, cold and naked, not caring whether I recognized her or not, and producing in me a shudder of fear rather than a trusting devotion? Must not the truth *be taken up into my life*? That is what I now recognize as the most important thing. (12)

Kierkegaard's central task as an author, therefore, was to help the reader make the truth his own. He deliberately and carefully plotted his entire authorship to show his readers what it means to exist, and what inwardness and subjectivity signify. His strategy was to help them take a decisive stand: "I wish to make people aware so that they do not squander and dissipate their lives" (16).

Secondly, Kierkegaard is concerned with what is essentially Christian: Through my writings I hope to achieve the following: to leave behind me so accurate a characterization of Christianity and its relationships in the world that an enthusiastic, noble-minded young person will be able to find in it a map of relationships as accurate as any topographical map from the most famous institutes. (15)

Of what does this map consist? In *Practice of Christianity*, Kierkegaard writes that if anything is to be done, one must try to introduce Christianity into Christendom. The backdrop to his entire authorship was a Danish Lutheranism that had degenerated into a nominal state-religion. Three things, in particular, marred the church of his day. It is in this climate that Kierkegaard feels compelled to reintroduce Christianity. He seeks to provide a kind of map that would, for the sake of Christian truth, steer people away from Christendom. "An apostle's task is to spread Christianity, to win people to Christianity. My task is to disabuse people of the illusion that they are Christians – yet I am serving Christianity."

By Christianity Kierkegaard does not mean a system of correct doctrine or a set of behaviors: "The struggle is not between orthodoxy and heterodoxy. My struggle, much more inward, is about the *how* of the doctrine. I say that someone can accept the whole doctrine, but in presenting it he destroys it" (16). Kierkegaard's contention was that despite sound doctrine, or what of faith, the lives people live demonstrate that there is really no Christianity – or very little. Genuine Christianity, according to Kierkegaard, is anything but doctrine. It is a way of being in the truth before God by following Jesus in self-denial, sacrifice, suffering, and by seeking a primitive relationship with God. Unfortunately, doctrine is what people want. And the reason for this is because doctrine is the indolence of aping and mimicking for the learner, and doctrine is the way to power for the teacher, and doctrine collects people.

Kierkegaard's thinking originated in a violent revulsion for the spurious spirituality of his day. His difficulty was to find a way out of the confusion that consistently undermined anything truly Christian. How in the world are we to get out of the mess of Christendom, he wondered, when millions, due to the accident of geography, are Christians? How are we to get Christendom to drop its whole mass of

nominal members when it is the interest of the clergyman's trade that there are as many Christians as possible? How, exactly, are we to become Christian, especially when one is a Christian of a sort? Kierkegaard's strategy was to act as a corrective. He explains:

The person who is to provide the corrective must study the weak sides of the established order scrupulously and penetratingly and then one-sidedly present the opposite – with expert one-sidedness." This revelation is important to keep in mind while reading Kierkegaard. All the same he said, a corrective made into the norm is by that very fact confusing." Therefore, one should not lift his thought up and turn it into a norm. (18)

He felt his situation to be desperate, so he sounded the alarm accordingly. Yet he did not do this as some self-proclaimed prophet. He wrote as one who was without authority and who himself needed reforming: "What I have said to myself about myself is true – I am a kind of secret agent in the highest service. The police use secret agents, too. . . . But the police do not think of reforming their secret agents. God does" (19).

Moore says that Kierkegaard was adamant about his own Christian deficiency:

For my part I do not call myself a 'Christian' (thus keeping the ideal free), but I am able to make it evident that the others are still less than I. This is not meant as a judgment. Kierkegaard's hope was to arouse, to expose the deception he, as well as everyone else, was under. He never felt worthy of doing this. But he was compelled to strike out. I want to make the crowd aware of their own ruin. Understand me – or do not misunderstand me. I do not intend to strike them (alas, one

cannot strike the crowd) – no, I will constrain them to strike me. (21)

In reading Kierkegaard it would be a mistake to ignore the inner anguish of his own personal life. The currents of his thought spring forth from within, as much as they do from his broader cultural setting. Although a complete biography of Kierkegaard is beyond the scope of this introduction, it is important for our purposes to understand the four significant crisis relationships in his life. These relationships constitute Kierkegaard the man, and grasping them is paramount in understanding him as a writer.

About Kierkegaard, Walter Lowrie's argues that Kierkegaard emphasizes the religious categories showing the contrast between the 'aesthetic' and the religious points of view; the concept of the individual; the notion of divine providence; indirect; the absoluteness of the Christian claim. On the other hand, Nelson disagrees with Lowrie as he finds the book 'an authentic map' of Kierkegaard's 'labyrinthine world from his own hand and even if not true down to the last detail, it is an indispensable interpretation of the anguished pilgrimage of an extraordinary spirit.

He argues that Kierkegaard's use of pseudonyms is a topic that intrigues not only most Kierkegaard scholars but also many twentieth-century philosophers like Heidegger, Sartre, Levinas and Derrida, to name but a few prominent figures influenced, directly or indirectly, negatively or positively, by his work. Many issues, such as the question of authorship/authority, of the possibility of communication, etc., have consequently been raised.

Although these are of great importance for a proper evaluation of Kierkegaard's philosophy, their discussion will be approached indirectly, along the discussion of the main topic of this work, which concerns the interpretative space that opens up between Kierkegaard's so-called religious works and the non-religious ones.

As will become evident, the religious element is always present in Kierkegaard's works even when it seems that his development as an author follows a linear path towards the attainment of a purer or more consistent religious dimension. The latter serves either as the invisible ground of the aesthetic works or, in the case of Kierkegaard's 'purely' religious works, as the pre-eminent element to be discovered by the reader.

Regardless of the apparent incompleteness¹ of this enumeration it is important to point out that Kierkegaard wants to make clear that his development as an author does not follow a linear route. In other words, he does not see himself as an aesthetic author who subsequently, with the passing of time, becomes a religious author. On the contrary, he insists that, right from the beginning, he was and still is, at the time of the book's writing, a religious author. However, this is a far cry from arguing that he remains the same person, with a fixed identity underlying his whole work. Even less do I suggest that his writings can be interpreted as the products of an underlying, transparent and immutable self-consciousness, as such a conception would exclude the possibility of a continuous development and metamorphosis of his personhood. Rather, the religious dimension of Kierkegaard's works was arguably present from the start.

In Kierkegaard's self-interpretation, this article serves as a testimony in the confrontation of witnesses, in order to make it impossible at the end to explain the phenomenon by supposing that there was an author who first was an aesthetic author and later changed and became subsequently a religious author – for he was a religious author from the beginning and was aesthetically productive even at the last moment.

Importantly, the distinction between aesthetic and religious works is not clear-cut. Moreover, it is necessary to underline the centrality Kierkegaard attributes to the

intersection of these domains, which is seen as always remaining blurred. Indeed, one has to keep in mind that, either under the guise of a pseudonym or using his own name, Kierkegaard is constantly attacking every approach that considers human existence as a fixed whole, in other words, as possibly being subjected to the pre-established categories of an absolute system. What constantly intrigues Kierkegaard's pseudonymous authors is the attempt to trace and face the paradox of human existence and – even in those cases where the individual is not himself/herself aware of it – its encounter with the divine. Importantly, this encounter for Kierkegaard is the ground and precondition of the religious leap, this always deferred telos of human existence.

Kierkegaard's detestation of closed systems and his love of the flux allegedly characterizing humans is one of the possible – conscious or unconscious – reasons prompting him to use pseudonyms. He says that Kierkegaard's reluctance to reveal his inner experiences does not mean he is unwilling to be judged as an author and a person. Despite the complexity and the different levels of purposes pervading most of Kierkegaard's books, it is arguably right to suggest that this epigraph alerts the reader that 'the author intends to judge himself and hopes to be judged by others in the light of his perplexing purposes as well as his all too evident.

3. Struggle for Existence in Coelho's *Eleven Minutes*

Overview of the Novel

Eleven Minutes is based on the experiences of a young Brazilian prostitute called Maria, the main character of the novel, whose first innocent brushes with love leave her heartbroken. At a tender age, she becomes convinced that she will never find true love. When a chance meeting in Rio takes her to Geneva, she dreams of finding fame and fortune yet ends up working as a prostitute.

As the story moves ahead, Maria drifts further away from love, she develops a fascination with sex. But when she meets a handsome young painter she finds she must choose between pursuing a dark path of sexual pleasure for its own sake, or risking everything for the possibility of sacred sex; sex in the context of love. *Eleven Minutes* is a gripping and daring novel, which sensitively explores the sacred nature of sex and love, inviting us to confront our own prejudices and embrace our inner light.

Maria encounters with love failures at an early adolescent stage and hatred for love goes to seek her fortune 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.

Maria, then, befriends Nyah 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. 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.

Eleven Minutes depicts two types of prostitution: prostitution for money and sacred prostitution. There are also direct references to sadomasochism. 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.

Therefore, Paulo Coelho has once again demonstrated that he is the master of contemporary fiction with this book. He has avidly explored sexuality in an amazingly decent way. The story is about a young Brazilian woman, Maria, whose search for love leads her through the dark alleys of the shunned undergrounds. She had come to Switzerland with the hopes of a better job but ends up selling her flesh for money. She gets fed up with the harsh turn of events until she meets Ralf, a handsome young painter, the man who is able to see the light in her eyes. This book is

about self-discovery and how Maria has to choose between a dark life of prostitution; sex for the sake of money; and a life with Ralf that would involve 'sacred sex'; sex in the context of true love! The book describes the transformation of Maria from a naive woman in search of fame and money to an emotionally stable and level-headed individual. It is an enlightening read! The fight against the extremities of life that Maria puts up is definitely a motivational factor for many of us. The author delves into the life of women who are looked down upon by the society. The book is complete with quotes that leave a mark in your mind.

Struggle and Survival of Maria

The novel focuses on the life of characters especially Maria who fights for the existence. It depicts the character as a struggling girl who encounters with several adversities in her life. She learns that life is full of struggle and the world is adverse for her. She has to struggle for the existence throughout the life. Taking the help of existential theory which interprets human being as an isolated individual and alienated creature in the world, the researcher is going into the depth of the novel how characters have existential quality.

The novel begins from Maria who is called a prostitute, "Once upon a time, there was a prostitute called Maria" (1). The statement shows that she is a victim of the society and she is like a mythical character or imaginative character because 'once upon a time' is pronounced for fable. Her struggle starts from here. None becomes prostitute automatically. It is not the natural process. But someone is made as Maria has been made. She was innocent and virgin in her childhood. It is the world, society, her own obligation made her the prostitute. She is in desire of having a good future, a handsome man hand to hand with her. However, all these dreams are shattered when she cannot gain as per her desire. This is her fate. This is her harsh life which does not

allow her to fulfill her dreams. The circumstance is bad for her, though she is in desire of getting something she dreams:

While she was waiting for her Prince Charming to appear, all she could do was dream. She fell in love for the first time when she was eleven, en route from her house to school. On the first day of term, she discovered that she was not alone on her way to school: making the same journey was a boy who lived in her neighbourhood and who shared the same timetable. They never exchanged a single word, but gradually Maria became aware that, for her, the best part of the day were those moments spent going to school: moments of dust, thirst and weariness, with the sun beating down, the boy walking fast, and with her trying her hardest to keep up. (1-2)

The lines show that she has also dream or desire of something. It is her early age that she falls in love with a boy when she is going to school. She thinks that the life is enjoyable with the person she befriends.

In her early days, she is happy with her boy friend. She moves here and there enjoying with him. As these lines go: "The following day Maria and her boyfriend went for a walk in the country side. They talked a little, and Maria asked if he wanted to travel, but, instead of answering the question, he took her in his arms and kissed her" (8). Here, it shows that there are two persons: male and female or boy or girl, they are of different feelings and experience though they are together. It shows that being together also, everyone has different experiences and the world because the world is oneself only.

Maria is becoming mature day by day. She is experiencing new things as she grows up. Her presence in the world is becoming important for her life. In the new

experience of her life, she goes a lot of suffering as well. She also knows that her private life and public life are totally different. Previously she does not know she should not touch her genitals in front of her. Masturbation is taboo in the society when she does within the knowing of others. It is clear when the text is read:

However, her fifteenth year brought with it not only the discovery that you were supposed to kiss with your mouth open, and that love is, above all, a cause of suffering. She discovered a third thing: masturbation. It happened almost by chance, as she was touching her genitals while waiting for her mother to come home. She used to do this when she was a child and she liked the feeling, until, one day, her father saw her and slapped her hard, without explaining why. She never forgot being hit like that, and she learned that she shouldn't touch herself in front of other people. (11)

Therefore, Maria knows that life is changing and she is being mature and knows the world.

Similarly, as Kierkegaard says one is free to make choices in one's life. Life is everyone's individual. One lives up to the point of making choice. Moreover, there is no single truth, but there are many truths which are personal. What is right and what is wrong depend upon one's own decisions and thoughts. In the novel also we can find same situation when Maria experiences her personal life. What is life? To give the meaning of the life, it depends on the situation. The same life can be better or worse. For Maria, when she enjoys with her boy friend her life is meaningful and secure. But later on she understood her life as she grew mature. The lines go like this: "At the same time, she grew more and more insecure in her relationships with boys, and more and more determined to leave the place where she lived" (13). In this way, the

meanings of life are changing with the change of her age and experience.

The subjectivity is another phenomenon of existential theory. Whatever we experience and react it is our subjectivity. For another there can be another experience and reaction. Maria is understanding the world from her own perspective not the world itself. Her bitter experience with her boy friend makes her lonely. She just says that all people especially men are like the one who betrayed her. It is her only self perception. It is not the objective evaluation. Thus, for her: "After a long time, she came to the conclusion that men brought only pain, frustration, suffering, and a sense of time dragging" (13). It means she expresses her own feeling and her reaction is private and personal not universal. It is also clear that one expresses his/her personal feeling believing that others also have same feeling.

The existential concept is that individuals are influenced by the subjectivism. They intend to understand the world in their own ways. Sometimes they want to change the traditional concept and want to adopt new because they believe in the new experience. Maria is experiencing new thing in the new world. Although she remembers the past childhood, she is attracted by the new world with the new experience. The text goes on:

She felt that this was the beginning of the road she had so longed for during her childhood and adolescence in the sertao, the Brazilian backlands, putting up with the constant droughts, the boys with no future, the poor but honest town, the dull, repetitive way of life: she was ready to be transformed into the princess of the universe! (22)

It implies the sad world and the bitter experience of Maria. She says that the life is repetitive and futile working and doing the same thing.

Thomas R. Flynn asserts that existentialism is a personal feeling and

experience because we are individual to analyze the world from our perspective. He says: "Existentialism is a person-centered philosophy. Though not anti-science, its focus is on the human individual's pursuit of identity and meaning amidst the social and economic pressures of mass society for superficiality and conformism" (25). He means to say that existentialism focuses on the human individual identity. The text asserts:

She saw a group of people laughing and looking at the sea, afraid to go in. Two days ago, she had felt the same thing, but now she was no longer afraid; she went into the water whenever she wanted, as if she had been born there. Wouldn't it be the same in Europe? (29)

She makes her own mind up to struggle with the life herself. Now she makes herself bold to fight the fear.

Maria struggles her life and goes past and future to compare her present life. She wants to keep her happy all the time. She is conscious about the environment:

And Maria thought about the little boy who had asked to borrow a pencil, about the young man who had kissed her and how she had kept her mouth closed, about her excitement at seeing Rio for the first time, about the men who had used her and given nothing back, about the passions and loves lost along the way. (55)

Thus, Maria realizes that the world is selfish and the people want to take only not give. She thinks that she has to adjust with the world and moves ahead. She gradually understands the world that personal life is one with which everyone has to fight alone.

Similarly, Flynn says that existentialism is individual in which there is personal view. Our achievement is personal and failure and downfall are also our personal though we are in society. He says:

Existentialism is known as an 'individualistic' philosophy. We shall qualify this view when we consider its social dimension in Chapter 5. But from the outset we should note that, for the existentialist, being an individual in our mass society is an achievement rather than a starting point. Again, each existentialist will treat this subject in his or her own way. But their underlying theme is that the pull in modern society is away from individualism and towards conformity. It is in this respect that Kierkegaard refers to the 'plebs', Nietzsche unflatteringly speaks of the 'herd', Heidegger of '*Das Man*', and Sartre the 'one'. In every case, the reference is to thinking, acting, dressing, speaking, and so forth as 'they' do. (24)

That means, everyone has his/her thinking, acting, dressing, speaking and so on to define the life. It cannot be general meaning of the life, but individual. Maria thinks in the same way, which is proved by the diary she has written in:

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

Moreover, Maria has assimilated the condition that she has to fight herself in the alien world. She knows that the world is not appropriate for her, still she has to adjust with it: "The invisible woman at her side said again that things weren't that simple, but Maria, although glad of this unexpected company, asked her not to interrupt her thoughts, because she needed to make some important decisions" (61). Thus, she believes that she is able enough to make her decisions herself. She does so

because the adverse world has made her strong and bold.

In this novel, Maria is the leading character who loves freedom and adventure at the same time shy of telling her love; philosophical and flexible in her thoughts and action. Even at the very end she could not determine what is good for her to stay with it. Even while she is a prostitute, she keeps her dream and follows it. She plays the role of a child, teacher, partner and mother. Still her important decisions were not justified by the author. Contradiction in thoughts and action is brand Maria, where the author fails to explain the logic behind those decisions. One who explored all areas of lovemaking and knows the highest philosophy of soul mate visits night clubs often – still pious and philosophical and heavenly – the character helped to explain the author's point of views but the author failed to strengthen the character with reason. Situations created by the author are not convincing either. The motivation is missing in many instances and he failed to create compelling situations. The insecurities of the source or desperate attempt to justify wrong decisions do not do any good to the book as a novel. This restricted the reader's interest on the book purely on the philosophical side of it using the story only as a skeleton. For this reason, readers who identify with the philosophy will find the book entertaining where readers who look for story and follow the mind of characters will find it not so attractive.

Maria can be the representative of womankind in general. They get into relations quite too easily and live the sex life without soul in its place. They expect of a glamorous life where soon they realize that they have to settle with what they receive and make the best out of it. When soul is not in its place, it is nothing but prostitution where they only give their bodies. The husbands visit them as customers here they had their own everyday changing fantasies and habits. The day to day struggles keep the family life in astray. All the day, their husbands will be behaving

like sadists the woman are made to believe that the pain too is pleasure and conveniently enter the bed in night with sweet words like they are angels. One has to take a different route to explore the solution path which leads to the meeting of souls so that the pilgrimage can begin. Yes, there can have a different story in the story!!

Thus, the novel is informative and thought provoking. At the same time, some messages are negative. It only gives the trouble-less side of prostitution where the dangers in the field are much higher than the author assumes. Not only that the brokers are not so generous to give them away but also the world of diseases doesn't spare them much. Chances are that few will be thinking for a yes reading the novel to attempt a one year adventure by giving away the body. In the modern world where flesh is traded electronically and the world is a global village no prostitute can hide in the corner of the world and can regain my virginity - let it be the one of soul or body. The news will reach home before they return and it will not be the same sky in which they wish to follow their dreams.

In this way, the novel mainly deals with the live of Maria who passes from one state to another in search of meaning in her life. She thinks that freedom is essential thing to survive:

Although she believed that love is the only true experience of freedom, and that no one can possess anyone else, she still harbored a secret desire for revenge, and this formed part of her triumphal return to Brazil. After setting up the farm, she would go back to her hometown and make a large deposit in Swiss francs at the bank where the who had two-timed her with her best friend was working. (93)

It means, love cannot be possessed by anyone. Because of her past experience of love and betray she has the feeling of revenge, she felt triumph about it.

Similarly, existentialism is a philosophy of freedom, even if these thinkers do not agree on the precise meaning of that basic term. Nietzsche, for one, famously denied the notion of free will and the moral choice that it exercises. His project of bringing the human being back to earth and away from its illusions about the transcendent and eternal turned him toward the biological dimension of human existence, its irrational instincts and drives: what he called 'will-to-power', which, despite its popular association with choice and dominance, is really the answer to the metaphysical question 'What is there, ultimately?' – and this, notwithstanding his animus against metaphysics. Taken in its cosmic sense, will-to-power is the force that moves the universe; understood biologically, it is the irresistible life impetus that drives the biosphere; psychologically, it is the drive to dominate and control. Its 'highest' expression is the self-control exercised by the free spirits for whom Nietzsche reserves a 'higher' morality than the chiefly religious ethics of the herd.

As French philosopher Michel Haar observes, "Nature as a whole is will-to-power" (34), and it manifests itself in every dimension of existence. This is why philosopher Paul Ricoeur could list Nietzsche among the masters of suspicion, along with Marx and Freud. Each thinker casts doubt on our ostensive accounts of why we do what we do. The real reason for our behavior, they claim, lay elsewhere. In Nietzsche's case, that ultimate source is will-to-power. As Foucault will later say in a Nietzschean mode, the most high-minded efforts at penal reform in the early 19th century, for example, were ultimately expressions of the desire for more effective control of populations.

What place is there, then, in such a universe for creative freedom in the existentialist sense? What is the ground for the responsibility that we feel in ourselves and ascribe to others? This is the perennial problem of freedom versus determinism, but given a

more dramatic twist as befits an existentialist version. Flynn adds:

In a universe where every event has a cause and every cause is necessitating (both claims open to dispute), no place seems left for the absolute beginnings that popular understanding of existentialist freedom proclaims. Every event has an antecedent (whether natural or cultural according to the kind of determinism one is proposing) and every cause is necessitating. In effect, under this description, nobody could have acted otherwise than they did. (38)

Therefore, to have every effect there should be cause. There is not any absolute thing for him.

In the novel, other characters have also internalized their problems and are ready to face the challenges. Ralf Hart, for instance, has accepted such thing: "Ralf Hart was a man who had accepted challenges and had learned everything, and now he was asking this woman, this prostitute, this Understanding Mother, to save him. How absurd" (129)! Thus existentialism is the concept which teaches one to live struggling with adversity.

Existential theory is close to naturalism. Nature is part of the human beings. Sometimes, it may be helpful to the human beings while other times it may be obstacle with which one has to confront:

Everyone knows how to love, because we are all born with the gift. Some people have a natural talent for it, but the majority of us have to re-learn, to remember how to love, and everyone, without exception, needs to burn on the bonfire of past emotions, to relive certain joys and griefs, certain ups and downs, until they can see the connecting thread that exists behind each new encounter; because there is a connecting

thread. (141)

Therefore, to love is the natural thing but how to love is not-natural. One has to learn to make the social manner acceptable to others.

Existentialism emphasizes the fact that we are alone in being aware that we must ultimately die and that this unavoidable condition, which faces us all as individuals, is the most important point of our existence. Existential philosophers postulate that people at certain points in history and within their personal lives try to forget in understanding the human experience and ourselves. The existentialists claim that when people have to face the difficulties they attempt to move away. Human experiences are related to the desire. Desire is personal that is concerned with psychology. Maria has also her personal desires to live happily. She moves here and there to get the meaning of life. The movement teaches her several things and she is able to understand the world in her own way:

Every human being experiences his or her own desire; it is part of our personal treasure and although, as an emotion, it can drive people away, generally speaking, it brings those who are important to us closer. It is an emotion chosen by my soul, and it is so intense that it can infect everything and everyone around me. (167)

These words are written by Maria in her diary. As she grows up, her maturity takes place and experiences more and more. She asserts that personal treasure drive people away. Moreover, emotional soul can infect everything in one's life.

The protagonist of the novel, Maria is on the journey of life to find what true love is but ends up letting her own life guide her. She enters a life that leads her down the path of sexual awakenings and almost leads to her self-destruction when she is introduced to all sides of sexual experience.

In this way, the novel is about the girl Maria who hails from some remote village but does not want to ruin her life there itself. She leaves the house in search of prosperity, riches and her one true love. She like most girls from villages is lured by a man claiming to get her a great job in a big city and she falls for the false promises.

Once there she sees the truth which she has always waited to see just that the truth is not what she imagined. She sees pain and suffering and no earning unlike her image of it. She had made her mind up and left on her journey, so she decides to live ahead and try her luck. This turns out to be the worst decision of her life and changes the whole course of her life. She ends up in only one place where she is able to earn money easily - A Brothel. She learns the innermost needs of men. She learns the different ways of pleasuring men and getting them to feel good about being with a woman. at a time in the book the author also mentions that few men just wanted to talk and do nothing because they felt very lonely.

In the beginning of her life, Maria had a lot of dream to be someone in the future. She had great aim to earn money and true love then she back to her hometown. The world does not favors one to fulfill the dream as expected. She has to struggle throughout her life in order to get happy life. In the course of searching meaning in her life, she learned many things and got moral lesson:

She had arrived with the dream of earning lots of money, learning about life and who she was, buying a farm for her parents, finding a husband, and bringing her family over to see where she lived. She was returning with just enough money to realize one of those dreams, without ever having visited the mountains and, worse still, a stranger to herself. But she was happy; she knew the time had come to stop. (235)

Although she could not fulfill her all dreams, she at least learned many things from

her struggle. She also realizes that a little money is enough to keep one happy. This is the real meaning of life. Eventually, Maria realizes that material things cannot give one happy. Money does not give full happiness in one's life. It is the medium through which one can spend the life. It is the thing that can help us move our life but it is not everything. More than money, one needs family, love, affection, sense of affinity and so on. These lines prove that how she is crazy to see her family:

She slept on the short flight between Geneva and Paris. She hadn't had time to think about what she would tell them at home, what story she would invent, but her parents would probably just be happy to have their daughter back, and to have a farm and a comfortable old age ahead of them. (269)

It shows that money cannot replace the parental love and the homely life. It is only momentary happiness. What one needs is permanent love and sense of affinity that is gained from the home, society and the company of people. Maria is in need of getting love from the parents and her family members. She waits at the airport expecting to come someone from her family. She feels jealousy when other passengers embrace with their relatives. Her psychology is saying such sense that she is in desire of being affected. It expresses:

She got off the plane and went through the security checks; her luggage would go straight on to the next plane, so she didn't have to bother with that. The doors opened, the passengers emerged and embraced whoever was waiting for them, wife, mother, children. Maria pretended not to notice, at the same time pondering her own loneliness, except that this time she had a secret, a dream, which would make her solitude less bitter, and life would be easier. (270)

Thus, Maria understands the life at the end when she goes out. She thinks that life would be easier when she meets her family.

In conclusion, Maria has several fluctuations in her life. She moves from a remote village of Brazil, with innocent brushes with love failures at an early adolescent stage and hatred for love. She goes to seek her fortune in Switzerland, only to find that reality is a lot harder than she expected. She starts working in a nightclub as a samba dancer for a brief period, then 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. She earns a lot of money by involving in prostitution. She struggles with the life and understands the true meaning. She understands that life is not easy and the world is adverse to live happily. She realizes that money cannot give one happiness. For the happiness one should be united with the family and the native place.

4. Conclusion

Survival of the Fittest

Existence is the word for the human beings and their state of presence in the world. When one is born, he/she is alone and has to struggle with the world alone. Although we are with our family, society, friends and so on, we have to fight real battle alone. In real sense, we are alienated being in the world. Different scholars have given different meanings about the life and their struggle in the world. It is said that life is human consciousness how we experience and take it is life.

In the same manner, the world is not fully fit for everyone. Human beings are delicate creatures. They have to face various problems in the world. The struggle may not work properly all the time and they may fall in further problems. They like to move from one place to another for that. Eventually, they realize that whatever is given to them and whatever they can, they should do without being pessimistic. Many philosophers like Plato and Aristotle define the existence in their own way. However, their main idea is that the human beings should go ahead facing with the challenges whatever problems come on the way. They move from one place to another but they cannot achieve anything. Still, they can learn something from the life and make their life meaningful as much as they have.

Furthermore, life is a characteristic of its objects that have self-sustaining biological processes. In the course of fighting with the existence, the individual's starting point can begin from what has been called a sense of disorientation and confusion. Actually, the world is absurd and meaningless for the human beings. Human beings must adjust with it to survive in the adverse world.

Danish philosopher, theologian, poet, social critic, and religious author Soren Kierkegaard postulates that we could manage to see ourselves as we truly are. He says

that we understand the world in our own way not other people define the life.

Kierkegaard is in fact likes to continue on a tradition, which could trace its roots back to Pascal, Aquinas and Socrates in the West and to some elements of Taoism and Buddhism in the East.

According to Kierkegaard, existential theory is the name that describes a number of closely related and similar philosophies. The prime concern of existential philosophy is to seek to attain an understanding of the human condition, 'as it manifests itself in our concrete, lived situations'. Attention is directed at considering our physical dimension and also our experience of freedom, joy and suffering and our reactions to these and other elements of our lives.

Coelho Paulo in his novel *Eleven Minutes* deals with the experiences of a young Brazilian prostitute called Maria. She realizes in her early age that she does not get true love from anyone, as she is betrayed by Rio in Geneva. Maria moves from one. When she meets a handsome young painter, she finds she must choose between pursuing a dark path of sexual pleasure for its own sake. Maria encounters with love failures at an early adolescent stage and hatred for love goes to seek her fortune in Switzerland. Her working in a nightclub as a samba dancer makes her realize that this is not what she wants. In the course of her struggle with the life she befriends Nyah who gives her advice on her new profession. Then she becomes quite successful and famous and her colleagues begin to envy her. Time passes and Maria becomes a professional prostitute keeping her customers' mind and soul cool.

Her world happy world, thus, turns upside down after meeting Ralf, a young Swiss painter as she falls in love with him immediately and begins to experience what true love is. Now, she is 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. Before leaving, she decides to rekindle the dead sexual fire in Ralf and learns from him about the nature of Sacred Sex.

In this way, the novel *Eleven Minutes* delineates the two types of prostitution: prostitution for money and sacred prostitution. The story of Maria's journey is what true love is. When she has given up hope to find true love, she finds her true inner light and her everlasting true love. As Maria becomes mature day by day, she experiences new things. She knows that masturbation is taboo in the society as she gets slapped by her father.

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