

Tribhuvan University

Struggle for Existence in Coelho's *Veronica Decides to Die*

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Letter of Recommendation

Mr. Shisir Jnawali has completed his thesis entitled “Struggle for Existence in Coelho’s *Veronica Decides to Die*” under my supervision. He carried out his research from Feb. 2009 (A.D.) to July 2009 (A.D.). I hereby recommend his thesis to be submitted for viva voce.

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Approval Letter

This thesis entitled “Struggle for Existence in Coelho’s *Veronica Decides to Die*”, submitted to the Central Department of English, Tribhuvan University, by Shisir Jnawali, has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

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Abstract

The research work on Paulo Coelho's *Veronica Decides to Die* explores the choices that all the human beings make between living and dying, despair and hope to sustain the existence. Context of the novel Veronica, the protagonist, who takes overdoses of sleeping pills in order to commit suicide, comes to realize precious value of life when she just has few days to live. In course of her journey towards understanding her existence, she experiences the world around her with paradoxes of hate and love, anger and joy, disgust and pleasure. However, she loves and struggles to exist in such paradoxical world despite she had attempted for suicide once.

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I Coelho and Existential Philosophy

This research work has analyzed Coelho's *Veronica Decides to Die* from the perspectives of existential issues. The protagonist of the novel, Veronica's constant struggle between the life and death recalls her struggle for existence. So, this research takes the issues in the view of Veronica, when she comes to know that she has just few days to live. She comes to realize the precious value of each and every moment in her life, following her increasing awareness that she has short span of time to live. Therefore, this research work has appropriate to analyze her life as an existential point of view after she struggles to live her last moment.

In this way, the protagonist novel takes determined and devoted steps towards the process of understanding life though she came to realize that life is a meaningless nothing and her increasing awareness of life as a series of routine works and meaningless facticities. Having experienced everything she could experience she was almost certain that everything ended with death. That is why "she had chosen suicide! Freedom at last, Eternal oblivion" (Coelho 7). She had spent many afternoons walking gaily along the streets of Ljubliana or gazing- from the window in her convent room at the snow falling on the small square with its statue of the poet. Once for almost a month, she had felt as if she were walking on air, all because a complete stranger, in the middle of that very square, had given her a flower.

She believed herself to be completely normal. Two very simple reasons lay behind her decision to die and she was sure that, were she leave a note explaining many people would argues with her. The first reason: everything in her life was the same and once her youth was gone, it will be downhill all the way, with old age beginning to leave irrepressible marks, the departure of friends. She would gain nothing by continuing to live; indeed, the likelihood of suffering only increased.

The second reason was more philosophical: Veronica read the newspapers, watched TV and she was aware of what was going on in the world. Everything was wrong and she had no way of putting things right-that gave her sense of complete powerlessness.

In a short while, through, she would have the final experience of her life which promised to be very different: death. She wrote a letter to the magazine, then abandoned the topic, and concentrated on more pressing matters more appropriate to what she was living, or, rather, dying, through at that moment (Coelho 16).

Throughout this novel, Veronica compares her life existence with God also: "If God exists, and I truly don't believe he does, he will know that there are limits to human understanding. He was the one who created this confusion in which there is poverty, in justice greed and loneliness. He doubtless had the best of intentions but the result have proved disastrous; of God exists, he will be generous with those creatures who chose to leave this Earth early and he might even apologies for having made us spend time here" (22).

In order to analyze the protagonist's existence or struggle for existence by main character Veronica who is searching of her own existence, can be analyzed her expression or understanding of life that every second of existence is a choice we all make between living and dying. This is a moving and uplifting song to life, one that reminds to veronica that every moment in our lives is special and precious. She only comes to realize this fact after committing suicide attempt by taking sleeping pills and she has just few days to live. So, while understanding Veronica's life story, it can be analyzed her existence to live a life and choose an existentialism as a tools and compares her life existence in the eyes of existential philosopher. So, it is best to write research paper after collecting available materials about the school of existentialism.

While examining the story of Veronica, it comes to realize that her life struggle is just for her existence that she couldn't find during her life period. She doesn't want to live her life meaninglessly.

Existentialism is the modern system of belief that started with opposing the doctrine that viewed human beings as a manifestation of an absolute value. As the two great wars, especially the second world war of nuclear holocaust proved that human ration alive no more worked. The terrified western people began to think over the role and activities of individual rationality no more worked. The terrified western people began to think over the role and activities of individual irrational in the existence of human beings. The certainties, coherence and scientific reasoning that ruled nineteenth century and before smashed into fragments. Anxiety, absurdity and uncertainty ruled the fragmented world. The writers saw the world totally absurd, incoherent, disintegrated, chaotic and disordered, not governed by the laws of providence, but by pure chance and contingency. This feeling of an existence without justification became the main proposition of twentieth century. That widespread feeling of despair and of separation from the established order led to the idea that people have to create their own values in a world where traditional values no longer reign. Existentialism draws attention to the risk, the void of human reality and admits that the human being is thrown into the world in which pain, shuttering, frustration, alientation, sickness, contempt, malaise and death dominates.

So, such dark portrait of such a sickness could be found even in the case of Veronica, who should not getting her life in order, meaning, coherent, she states to feel fear, alientation, despair and frustration in her life so she choose to commit suicide and her life just death dominates. She saw the world and listen the TV news, events that all things are in chaos, disorder. Even she didn't get any unique value of

life. After committing suicide attempt, she just wants to live her life. So, this novel could be examined in the view of existentialism.

Paulo Coelho however, *Veronica Decides to Die* has received ample criticisms in the circle of the leading critics of the modern time. The pathetically analyzing action of the novel has arrested the attention of many renowned critics.

A noted critic of Paulo Coelho, Osman Lins examined the novel *Veronica Decides to Die* on the basis of its undercurrents. Darting his critical insight towards the underlying implication of veronica suicidal attempt, he comments:

Veronica's decision to put an untimely end to her life by her own hand carries a crucial motive of exposing the inherent limitations in the materialistic conception of life. In the pinnacle of prosperity also Veronica decided to die. If climactic growth of material prosperity can't lead life to contentment, why believe in the sovereign definition of life offered by materialism Veronica's attempted suicide is a subtle critique of the materialistic conception of life. (17)

The critic Osman Lin analyzed the novel from the generalized assumption regarding Paulo Coelho. It has become a widespread fact that Paulo Coelho hinted at the probable chance of spiritual cultivation and quest only following the downfall in the sovereign stronghold criticism. The failure suicide is a strong criticism of materialism.

Exposing the main theme of the novel is not a story of death but one of life, the critic Jemni Silver has commented:

The premises of this novel seemed intriguing. It promised to deal not so much with the events that would lead to Veronica's suicide but rather the consequences. And not the effect on her friends and family, but rather the effect her suicide would have on HER. Not only that, by

turning the death by a person into a slow, garnishing death of a person. Paulo Coelho has created an utterly involving and original idea. Indeed would it not be the remaining and waiting that will haunt you to the end? Meaning, if you knew that you were to die in five days time, would it not a given that you wonder and regret? Questions like 'have I lived my life to the fullest, have I done all I'd ever wanted to achieve what more could I have contributed to the world etc?' These questions pertain to life: what has been achieved and what could have been accomplished had one been given the chance to live? And so, because of this, *Veronica Decides to Die* is not a story of death but one of life.

(27)

Needless to say, Jemmi Silver intends to claim that there was the mistake, saying this was a story of inspiration. He expected one of death; on which dealt with suicide and the anguish, regret and horror. Suicide is very complicated issue and seemed not to play a big part in Veronica's story. It along with her impending seemingly in evitable death, acted merely as a catalyst towards her expected desire to live and experience that which she had not before. Jemmi adds that Paulo Coelho could have really pushed this issue and come up with something very real and very dark. Instead, anyone are left something very surreal.

Exposing the inherent beauty of the novel the critic Bondo Wyszpolski has commented:

It is such a beautiful and touching story. In this book, a pretty and young woman Veronica decides to kill herself. She has not had tragedy happen to her or such. She is simply sick of the routine her life has taken and thinks that as she gets older things will only get worse. The

other reason she wanted to kill herself is that when she reads or hears the news, she feels everything is wrong in the world and she is completely helpless to change anything. An amazing book, *Veronica Decided To Die* contains many profound realizations. (24)

In addition to say, Bondo Wyszopolski intends to claim that in the chosen novel lots of generalizations about momentary awakening in life are subtly noticeable. In point of fact Bondo examined the text from the novelty of its theme.

But, Gail Hudson examines at this novel comparing Coelho's interest to be an artist an unacceptable profession in Brazil at the time:

During his numerous forced incarcerations that Coelho vowed to write some day about his experiences and the injustices of involuntary commitment. In this fable-like novel, Coelho makes good on his promise with the creation of a fictional character named Veronica who decides to kill herself when faced with all that is wrong with the world and how powerless she feels to change anything. Although she survives her initial suicide attempt. She is admitted to a mental hospital where she begins to wrestle with the meaning of mental illness and whether forced drugging should be inflicted of Veronica's fictional story was instrumental in passing new government regulations in Brazil that had made it more difficult to have a person involuntarily committed. (68)

Like any great story teller, Coelho has used the realm of fiction to magically infiltrate and alter the realm of reality as Gail Hudson comments. But Harpers critical approach to the novel is some what different. According to him:

Veronica Decides To Die projects the crucial need of spiritual insight and inspiration to cure the corroding and contaminating evil of materialistic view points. This novel makes western people alert as to the suffocating and suicidal nature of the existing view point of materialistic mode of life. (12)

H. Collins intends to emphasize that certain remedial measures needs to be taken to bring of materialistic life to the rhythm of profound contentment and inner realization. Gary Issacs looks at this novel from unusual view point. Concentrating on the life-enhancing power of the novel he says:

A novel capable to producing life-enhancing impact, *Veronica decides to die* thematizes that every second of existence is a choice we al make between living and dying. It reminds us that every moment in our lives is special and precious. (81)

Garry Issacs is clear obviously in his interpretation on the novel. He examines that novel on the basis of power to preserve the sanctity and preciousness of life. Despite of all those critics diverse critical remarks and the opinions the research has thrown the spot light upon *Veronica's* profound understanding of life only after she comes to know that she is going to die after some time however boldly se affirms life, it is downright ironical.

In order to research, analyze and prove my hypothesis, the work has been divided into four chapters. The first chapter contains the introduction of the issues perspective and literature review. Second chapter contains the research methodology; Under which it includes the existentialism as the tool looking the world and life. And the third and fourth chapters contain textual analysis and conclusion respectively.

II. Existentialism as the New Perceptive of Looking the World and Life

After 1930, and particularly after the Second World War, many writers began to oppose the doctrines that view man as the manifestation of an absolute value. Thrown into an incoherent, disordered universe in which individual destinies were instructed and torn apart by the Second World War of nuclear holocaust, they could not believe in the old concepts like unity, rationality and even in the Christianity. They saw the world totally absurd, not governed by the laws of providence but by the pure chance and contingency. This feeling of an existence without justification became the main proposition of twentieth century. Man is free of routine and conventions, he is laid bare and face to face with his own destiny. This utter feeling of alienation was the product of the recognition of 'death of god' on the one hand and the cataclysm of World War I and II on the other. Not only is 'god dead' as Nietzsche proclaimed but also all the intermediary values connection god and man declined. Man has lost even the certainties and values of his own existence which he had originally received from his belief in God. He is thus a deserted animal in the absurd and overwhelming universe.

On the background of such fragmented situation many writers and philosophers sought at least to reduce if not to alleviate the present condition of modern man. Existentialism is probably the most dynamic and appropriate philosophical movement to define and interpret the anxiety and the uncertainties of the human existence. By existentialism "we mean a doctrine which makes human life possible and in addition declares that every truth and every action implies a human setting and a human subjectivity" (Sartre¹⁰). *Encyclopedia International* pronounces that existentialism is near to life and death of people. Instead of concentrating on logic or science, "existentialism is primarily concerned with human existence, especially

with man's most extreme experience: the confrontation with death, anguish and anxiety, despair and guilt" A. Cuddon lays stress on the fact that the connotation of existence is something active in philosophy and he associates it with the Latin root "*ex 'out' + sister from stare' to stand*" (310). Thus the meaning of existence is to stand in the world that is incomprehensible. The term now "applies a vision of the condition and existence of man, his place and function in the world, and his relationship, or lack of one with God" (Cuddon 310). The these of existentialism found a particular relevance during the world war II when Europe found itself threatened by materials as ell as spiritual decay. The negative aspect of human existence such as pain, frustration, sickness, and death become for existentialist the essential feature of human reality. As the doctrine emerged world wide, the existentialist thinkers also differed greatly in various ways. Existentialism does not land itself to a single definition, for its principle theorists did not adhere to common body of doctrines. For example, some existentialists were atheists, like Jean Paul Sartre or some omitted God from their thought, like Martin Heidegger, and others, like Karl Jaspers, believed in God but not in Christian doctrines still others, like Gabriel Marcel and Nikolaou Berdyv were Christian and Martin Buber believed Jew (Perry and et al. 755). However, it may be said that with the existentialists, the problem of individual is central and that they stress man's real existence, his uncertain nature, his personal freedom, and his responsibilities for what he does and makes himself to be.

Soren Kierkegaard, a Danish philosopher belongs to the spiritual precursors of the modern existential mode. The existentialist attitude is more associated with atheistic thinker to whom religious belief seems like a cowardice act or as Camus calls it “philosophical suicide” (23). Lowrie relates Kierkegaard with the spy engaged in God’s service and writes:

He is like spy in the higher service. He is a spy who in his spying, in learning to know all about conduct and illusion and suspicious characters, all the while he is making inspection in himself under the closet inspection. (87)

Kierkegaard rejected the Hegelian system as an attempt to put man in place of god and emphasized the concept of the individual, of choice, of subjectivity, of dread and of anguish. He supported the idea that the self-realization of a human being comes when the individual takes full responsibility for his or her life. Thus, the individuality and its related notion of subjective truth are the core of his philosophy. Like other existential philosophers, Kierkegaard also provides the life defining decision to individual human being for authentic survival (*Historical Survey of Existentialisms* 622). According to Kierkegaard, the individual makes life bearable by choosing one way of life over other, especially choosing ‘spiritual’ over ‘aesthetic’ or ‘ethical’ life. Maunder sees no alternative of religious life in Kierkegaard and writes that “in choosing the religious life, there are no alternately rational reasons for doing so, only subjective or personal necessity and passionate commitment” (343). Robert Adudi sees a kind of linear movement in ‘the aesthetic’, ‘the ethical’, and ‘religious’ stages for the personal salvation. If the movement is other way round is eternal perdition instead of salvation (406). The religious life is characterize by faith, which

is always a dreadful certainty i.e. a hidden relationship with god. Lowrie and his co-writer argue:

Kierkegaard presented only one great choice: Either the aesthetic mode of life, whether it be a life of pleasure, despair or religious and metaphysical contemplation or the ethical mode of life culminating in Christianity. People must choose both to make aesthetic and to explain everything in that way or religion. (87-88)

Ellman and Fieldson also support Lowrie's view and write that "in a deeper sense there could be no question of a choice. The choice itself is decisive for the content of the personality, through the choice, the personality immerses itself in the thing chosen" (829). In making choice, the individual overcomes the affections that life is nothing. For Kierkegaard, the highest truth is that human beings are god's creature and can approach god by making passionate commitment to him (756). Blackburn also presents the same idea, when he asserts that "it is necessary to passionately commit oneself, to make a leap of faith, in the face of an objective uncertainty. One cannot know or prove that there is a God, one must simply choose to believe" (224).

Kierkegaard's truth philosophical quest is subjective experience acquired by an individual in the process of choosing a way of life. For choice Kierkegaard offers many possibilities that are arisen by negative emotions such as dread and despair.

Dread-which dominates existence through and through- is 'the sentiment of the possible'. It is the feeling of what can happen to a man even when he has made all of his calculations and taken every precaution. Despair, on the other hand discovers in possibility, it's only remedy, for if man remains without possibilities it is as if he lacked air. (622)

Kierkegaard gave the concept of existence and insisted in the importance of subjective truth in opposition to the rationalist philosophy in particular Hegelianism. "Existence" according to Kierkegaard, "is not just being there but living passionately, choosing one's own existence and committing oneself to a certain way of life" (204). Emphasizing subjecting subjective truth Kierkegaard writes: "The important thing is to understand what I am destined for, to perceive what the 'Deity' wants me to do. The point is to find the truth which is the truth or me, to find that idea for which I am ready to live and die" (qtd. in Nightingale 174).

The important thing for Kierkegaard as Mautner Thomas argues "is the subjective truth of one's own, existence in the face of objective uncertainties, not merely intellectual and ill-conceived challenge to prove that God exists" (344). For Kierkegaard, to exist is to face the uncertainties of the world and commit oneself passionately to a way of life. His notion of subjective truth was formulated in opposition on the idea that all choices have a traditional or objective resolution.

Regarding the subjective truth Mautner writes:

The notion of subjective truth does not mean as it may seem to mean a truth that is 'true for me'. It is rather a resolution in the face of an objective uncertainties for example, the existence of God, for which there are no adequate argument of evidence. (240)

Glicksberg connecting subjectivity with reality writes: "It was all together absurd to believe in God objectivity. Faith is immediacy, subjectivity is truth and truth is subjectivity" (19). Kierkegaard like Methew Arnold in "Doverbeach" deplores the ebb of faith in an age of civilization and sees that the greater misfortune of the present age is that people have forgotten what it mans to exist. He uses the word 'to exist' said Audi to refer to human existence. In this sense, god is said not to exist, even

though god has external reality” (407). Kierkegaard described human existence and unfinished process in which and individual must choose passionately. The passion that shape a person’s self are referred by him as “the individual inwardness or subjectivity” (408). Glicksberg comments that “the truth apprehended in inwardness chooses an objective uncertainty with what Kierkegaard calls the passion of the infinite” (26).

Similarly, the German philosopher Martin Heidegger presents the problem of Being and existence. He maintains that there is no pre-given essence. So, man himself is the author as well as reader of his own life. James R. Jacob evaluates him on the basis of his principle that is same like that of Sartre. He writes that “like Sartre, Heidegger insists that human ‘self interpreting being’ just are what they make themselves in the course of their active life” (qtd. In Audi 757). Separating being from beings Heidegger says “man stands out (*ex-sits nor merely ex-sits*) from things (being)” (801). Man is not completely captivated and defined by things but he is apart from them because he is ‘no-thing’. Man dwells in a world and continues to be there until his death. Being thrown into things, he falls away and is on the point of being drowned into things. Encyclopedia Britannica evaluating human behavior in Heidegger world writes:

Man is continually a pro-ject (Ent-wurt), submerged in things to such a degree that he is temporarily absorbed (Aufgehen in). He is than nobody in particular: and a structure that Heidegger calls (das man) they is revealed, which ... stresses man’s ‘other directedness’, his tendency to measure himself in terms of his peers.(803)

‘Dasein’, his term for ‘existence’ of ‘being there’ is not a constant phenomena but is rather ‘the happening’ of a life course stretched out between birth and death.

The “being of entities in the world is constituted by the framework of intelligibility or disclosedness opened by Dasein’s practices. Our own being as agents of specific types is defined by the world into which we are known”. For Glicksberg, Heidegger’s ‘Dasein’ and Tragic Vision is connected with death because he writes that “every moment of life is dying, everything man does is but a vain effort to escape from the ignominious destiny of death” (891). He pronounces that Dasein is revealed by the deep engagement with the world. Marvin Perry and his co-writers affirm that the individual in Heideggerian world has to face the problems of being to determine one’s own existence. He further says that man characterizes his existence authentically when he faces the world in all its particularities and concreteness (757). The painful human condition in which accomplishment is a mere illusion and happiness an evasion, permits the chance to face the human existence and thereby felling of dread or angst. But the feeling of dread or angst in reality is the prior form of human personality because “this constitutes the subjective being of man” (186). According to Heidegger, the angst manifests the freedom of man to choose himself and take hold of himself, in anxiety all entities (Seiendes) sink away into a ‘nothing’ and nowhere, man hovers in himself existing being nowhere at home. He faces nothings (das Nichts); and all average, obvious everydayness disappears and this is good, since he now faces the potentiality of authentic being (qtd. in Marvin, 801). Thus, it is clear from the above statement that the feeling of anxiety and the confrontation with death leads man to real ‘Being’. People struggle to transcend the feeling of dread or angst in existential crisis for authentic living. The opinion about the outcome of that struggle varies from person to person and from philosophy to philosophy. Gin-Lanari Lake sees the possibility of both victory and defeat in the struggle against dread:

The problem whether a man shall be or shall not be is an event that takes place in the experience of dread. The struggle with this dread determines whether man annihilate nothingness and thus perceive its other side, that is being; or whether nothingness shall annihilate man. (394)

Human being, Heidegger finds, displays three fundamental aspects, all however, constitution one internally unified structure. These aspects as expressed in the Encyclopedia of philosophy are “Facticity”, “Existentiality”, “Forfeiture” (450). Facticity, for him, means that human being is always already in the world, “I am always already in a world, in a sense in which my world is my world, it could no more be a world without me than I could be myself without it” (280). The term Existentialist refers again not to existence in the sense in which the stone or house exists, but to the personal existence, the existence of being. The process of existing is always dynamic not static. Human situation is a succession of unique confrontations demanding unique response. In the process of being in the world the individual can not cross itself the boundaries. So, the projection of the being is “projection in and of and with the world” (460). ‘Existentiality’ is thus the understanding of the world completely in its real sense. ‘Forfeiture’, the third fundamental attribute to human being means that we forget “being” for particular beings, in other words, the scattering of the essential forward drive through attention to the disturbing and disturbing cares of everyday and of the things and people that surround us everyday (54-59). *The Encyclopedia* concludes, “Human beings in its everyday mode are promiscuously public, it is life with others and for others in alienation from the central task of becoming itself” (460).

French novelist, playwright and exponent of Existentialism, Jean-Paul Sartre acclaimed the freedom of the individual human being. He is of the opinion that the 'forlorn' individual, in the threat of 'anguish' and 'despair', learns to confront the existence in the world without god. His philosophical insight, according to Honderich, was sharpened by the conformation with the terrors and torture of the great world war. Homeric further justified that "war which changed him from an academic philosopher and savant-grade writer into an intellectual, deeply committed to the fate of 'the wretched of the earth'" (791). Having written his defense of individual freedom and human dignity, Sartre defined himself as an atheist and saw existentialism as a means of facing the consequences of a godless universe (15). According to Sartre, existence comes first each man. However, circumscribed by his historical and environmental situation, is the author of his own life? Focusing this point sharply, Sartre writes: "if God does not exist, there is at least one being in whom existence precedes essence, a being who exists before he can be defined by any concept, and that this being is man" (15). Unlike Kierkegaard and other theistic existentialist, Sartre insisted that existentialism (atheistic) begins with the treatment of an individual and not with God, a pre-established ethic or a universal conception of divine nature that Nietzsche called 'god hypotheses. Preferring existence rather than essence of an individual Sartre writes that first of all man exists; turn up appears on the scene and only afterwards defines himself.

Every individual is alone in the world that is devoid of any absolute power like God. Like many other traditional religious thinkers, when we believe God as a creator. He is generally regarded as a superior sort of craftsman. Sartre argues when God creates the man in his own image. He knows exactly what he is creating. Thus, the concept of man in the mind of God is similar to the concept of art in the mind of

an artisan. Following certain technique and conception, God produces man just as an artisan does” (13-14). But for Sartre, God no longer exists and therefore, man comes from nothing. There is no God’s will from which man discovers the appropriate value and principle for his life as guiding force. If we suppose the material object (being-in-itself), the “production precedes existence” (14). Then it is not living soundly rather it is “bad faith” (18). Since the world is empty and devoid of any ethical values, we must choose our own ethics, define ourselves and create ourselves: “You’re free; choose, that is, invent. No general ethics can show you what is to be done; there are no omens in the world” (qtd. in Olafsan 15). Man’s freedom thus, is inescapable and manifests itself in each of the choices he makes. Freedom is what one is, even though it functions always within the given situation. In Sartre’s world where freedom plays central role, people are found to be characterized by an awesome degree of liberty. Paradoxically enough, Sartre comments man’s freedom as a kind of condemnation because, he writes that “he didn’t create himself yet, in other respect is free, because once thrown into the world, he is responsible for everything he does” (23).

As most of the existentialist claim, Sartre also stresses upon the subjectivity of the individual differentiating it with other inanimate object:

Man is always in the process of becoming. Man first of all is the being who hurls himself towards a future and who is conscious of imagining himself as being in the future. Man is at the start a plan which is aware of itself rather than a patches of moss, a piece of garbage, or a cauliflower; nothing exists prior to this plan, there is nothing in the haven, man will be what he will have planned to be [...]. He is therefore nothing else than the ensemble of his act. (16-32)

The platonic concept of the Ideal world and the relevant notion of reality disappeared along with Nietzsche's declaration of the death of the God. Therefore, there could no longer be the prior good and evil, reward and punishment, or heaven and hell. "Everything", according to Sartre, "is permissible is God does not exist and as a result man is forlorn because neither within him nor without does he find anything to cling to" (22). Everything in the human condition remains problematic, the existential hero, in the quest of freedom, is doomed to failure. But, the remarkable thing here is that the failure justifies his struggle and does not compensate. If the external world offers no consolation, then the people must be able to make a decisive choice in order to make authentic existence. Thus, man's freedom is absolute, but one can not escape responsibility and anguish. Since people are not determined by anything else, the responsibility of their being and deeds rests heavily on their shoulder. People's responsibility is very great, because in making any kind of choice, they are choosing for the whole world (Sartre 16-17). Every possible choice is open to an individual but the mere passive choice can not help him. Existence rather there should be deep involvement and commitment, too. A man should be involved in life, as a result he would be able to leave the impression on it and outside of that there is nothing. In this sense, it is clear that a man is nothing else than total sum of his undertakings.

Glicksberg, on the same token evaluates man in terms of his action:

The existentialist hero has definite possibilities to choose from, but his range of freedom is cruelly curtailed by his vision of nothingness and the dread that this vision calls for. If the Existentialist hero is to exhibit any greatness of soul in his encounter with nothingness, he must judge himself in terms of what he does. (100)

If the conception of God, the Father is discarded, then there should be someone to replace God like Nietzsche's superman, and invent new values necessary for an individual as well as for all humanity. Sartre, consequently endows this power to individual to invent the value of his own life has no prior meaning at all, but acquires it in the course of living. Therefore, life is not A or B or C or Z, it is sum total of A, B to Z.

Sartre makes a clear distinction between being in itself (*en-soi*) and being-for-itself (*pour-soi*). *En-soi applies to things, a thing exists in itself*. This means a thing is basically what it is. If this is the case, then the axiom about 'existence preceding essence' cannot be applied to an inanimate. In case of man, existence precedes essence, so man is '*pour-soi*' not '*en-soi*'. Man projects himself to the distant goals and values. His life is the movement to become something that he is not. The best way to conceive of the fundamental project of human reality is to say that man is the being whose project is to be God (63). To quote Sartre's own account:

The responsibility of the for-itself extends to the entire world as a peopled- world. It is precisely thus that the for-itself apprehends itself in anguish; that is a being which is neither the foundation of its own being nor of the others being nor the in-it self which from the world but a being which is compelled to decide the meaning of being within it and every where outside of it. The one who realizes in anguish his condition as being thrown into a responsibility which extends to his very abandonment has no longer either remorse or regret or excuse; he is no longer anything but a freedom which perfectly reveals itself and whose being resides in this revelation [...]. But most of the time we flee anguish in bad faith. (59)

As conscious person, a man cannot exist shut up in being-in-itself, rather makes him what he actually wants to be. No god is needed to account for his being. If there is no divine consciousness, there is nothing so support the objective realm. They require the denial of objective value. In this sense Sartre connects existentialism with humanism, not in the sense of regarding man as the creator of all values.

Like many other philosophers, Sartre places human consciousness or 'nothingness' in opposition to being or 'thingness'. Consciousness is not matter and by the same token escapes all determinism. On the one hand, there is consciousness (being-for-itself) and on the other, the existence of more things (being-in-itself). Sartre describes consciousness as nothing – 'not a thing'. Resenthal and his co-editor mention how Sartre avoids all types of object as being consciousness and denies that consciousness is or could be part of the causal order (Sartre, 379). "Consciousness", said P. Yidin "is a wind blowing from nowhere towards the world" (397). Dostoevsky declares that consciousness is the worst thing because it causes the miseries of all sorts. Similarly, Albers supports that consciousness in Sartrean world is nothing by itself except the power to "set itself outside of Being" (398). And Sartre designating it as for-itself, calls it a being through which nothingness comes into things (49). Sartre again differentiates 'consciousnesses from the 'self'. He placed 'self out in the world, like the self of another. "The self", described Robert Audi in the Sartrean philosophy, "is an on going project in the world with other people; it is not simple self awareness or self-consciousness as such (I think therefore I am) consciousness is nothing but the self is always on its way to becoming something" (710). Sartre states that through out our life we are free to face new possibilities to reform ourselves and to reinterpret our relation to the world outside us. This indeterminacy is that we can never be anything, and when we try to establish ourselves as something particular we are in bad faith:

“Bad faith is erroneously viewing ourselves as something fixed and settled, but it is also bad faith to view ourselves as a being of infinite possibilities and ignore the always restrictive facts and circumstance within which all choices must be made” (Rosenthal and Yudin 397). Glickserg forbidding Sartrean individual from plunging into bad faith writes: “By accepting this hard condition by living dangerously, Sartre’s hero save themselves from falling into bad faith” (109).

After the great devastation of the World War I and II, people confronted the age of anxiety, despair and crimes. The external support in which the public belief rested in the past were religious in character, but Albert Camus, like many other philosophers, believed that the decline of religious belief in modern period compelled people to realize the plight of Sisyphus. According to Grederick A. Olafson, Camus overlooked the traditional ideas that may speculative system could provide positive guidance for human life or any guarantee of the validity of human values. Olafson further assessed that Camus found the human situation synonymous to that to Sisyphus. Camus evaluated the condition of modern man and their situation in the following passage:

A word that can be explained even with bad reasons is a familiar word. But, on the other hand, in a universe suddenly divested of illusions and lights, man feels an alien, a stranger. His exile is without remedy since he is deprived of the memory of a lost home or the hope of a promised land. This divorce between man and his life, the actor and his setting, is properly the feeling of absurdity. (13)

Man lives with certain aims or plans for future before encountering the absurd situation but after that freedom to be does not exist. Death is there as the only reality. Camus argues that the transcendence of the absurd is achieved only through an intense

struggle not through the passive acceptance of situation. The existents have to discover some principle of justification for life. He writes, "One must imagine Sisyphus happy" (111). Sisyphus is happy by virtue of his scorn and defiance of the "gods and by virtue of a rebellion that refuses to give into despair" (Audi102). The life is devoid of meaning in this world but Camus insists strongly that man least makes sense through his own attempt:

I continue to believe that this world has no ultimate meaning. But I know that something in it has meaning and that is man, because he is the only creature to insist on having one. This world has at least the truth of man, and our task is to provide its justification against the fate itself. (*The Rebel*18)

Thus Camus believed that rebellion is one essential dimension of mankind. He found the possibility and principle of authentic existence in rebellion. Distinguishing rebellion with revenge he further writes:

Actually, rebellion is more than an act of revenge, in the strongest sense of the word. Resentment is very well defined by Scheler as auto-intoxication the evil secretion, in a sealed vessel, of prolonged impotence. Rebellion, on the other hand, removes the seal and allows the whole being to come into play. It liberates stagnant waters and turns them into a ranging torrent. (*The Rebel* 23)

Rebellion is a philosophical process and it has a different meaning than that of revenge. Revenge is personal human emotion whereas the rebellion or the revolt is universal. Knowing the valuelessness of life of man must root himself in the life of this earth and accept the challenges of the absurd. Man himself, not the god, bears the full responsibility of his destiny in a universe, which offers no justification for his

aspirations or commitments. Man is alone in the world and is always in the mode of becoming “what he is” according to Sartre. Camus insists that the realization of the freedom, he argues, “begins everything and nothing counts except through it” (*The Fact of Absurdity* 823). The tragedy of modern man is not due to the absurdity or the feelings of it but with the awareness of incoming death. It is “the intrusion of death that the human quest for happiness turns into curse” (“Camus and the Revolt” 54). When a man has a consciousness that he will die, he begins to feel the pang of that consciousness until his death; he will be helpless in front of death, more miserable than Dr. Faustus in front of Mephistopheles towards the end. Therefore, the present that is precarious is all a man can hope and enjoy.

The transcendence of the absurd, according to Camus, is not active without intense struggle. This is what Sisyphus does in “The Myth of Sisyphus”. The human being expects the world to be governed by rational principles but, if existence is entirely without reason, then the sustaining pattern of justified. The reality is mysterious and utterly unknowable. The only way to make life meaningful is the revolted against the meaninglessness. This attempt at least helps man to recognize his situation. Man is free to choose, but he meets the obstacles of an external order that is indifferent to his needs and these warring forces can not easily be reconcile. In such a condition of unfulfillment, the fact of purposelessness emerges. If the demands are not fulfilled and the life is incomprehensible than it is necessary to bring meaning into the world and thus affirm the both right of human freedom, he must take upon himself responsibility for creating values in the absurd universe. In this sense, Glicksberg comments that “the absurdist hero is thus transformed into a metaphysical rebel who dedicates himself to life not death, to affirmation not denial” (60). Camus develops the idea of the rebellion against meaninglessness in his book the rebel is as follows:

I proclaim that I believe in nothing and that everything is absurd, but I can not doubt the validity of my own proclamation and I am compelled to believe, at least, in my own protest. The first and only datum that is furnished in me, within absurdist experience is rebellion. Stripped of all knowledge, driven to commit murder or to consent to it, I possess this single datum which gains great strength from the anguish I suffer. Rebellion arises from the spectacle of the irrational coupled with an unjust and incomprehensible condition. (16)

In his opinion, to rebel is to exist. Sisyphus rebelled against the absurdity of the situation, so he existed, not simply existed but existed happily because he writes “one must imagine Sisyphus happy” (111).

Summarizing all the definitions and views by the existentialist, it can be said that Veronica's decision to commit suicide is the question directly linked with her existence that she finds meaningless futile and burden for the earth. Anxiety, fear, depression comes to the man when there is question of existence or she/he finds disorder, chaos, everywhere in his/her life. It is the fear, anxiety where Veronica searches her identity, existential crisis. So, this novel *Veronica Decides to Die* can analyzed existential view in terms of Veronica's struggle for life only when she comes to know the precious value of life when she has short span to live.

III Struggle for Existence in Coelho's *Veronica Decides to Die*

Paulo Coelho's novel *Veronica Decides to Die* portrays the constant struggle for her existence after realizing that every second of existence is a choice between living and dying. This struggle reminds us that every moment in our lives is special and precious. Veronica, the protagonist of this novel, has everything she could wish for, young and pretty with plenty of attractive boyfriends, a steady job, a loving family. Yet Veronica is not happy and in one winter's morning she bucked up the four packs of sleeping pills only to wake up sometime later in a local hospital, where she is told that despite the overdose of sleeping pills she is alive. But her heart is now irreparably damaged and she has only few days to live. After that the novel explores her fear, depression and frustration about her existence.

Her frustration through the life results due to her attempt for suicide. Veronica knows that life is always a matter of waiting for the right moment to act (Coelho 3). It also means that Veronica is searching for her own existence and existentialist really concern to the problem of man. They focus on man's concrete existence, his personal freedom and his responsibility for his/her choice. It may be said that with the existentialist the problem of man is central and that they stress man's concrete existence, his contingent nature, his personal freedom and his consequent responsibility for what he does and makes himself /herself to be. The first reason behind her suicide attempt is everything her life is same and once her youth has gone, it would be downhill all the way with old age beginning to leave irreversible makes the one set illness, the departure of friend (6).

She used to think that life is just a routine works being woman, daughter, mother in law, cooking, feeding their children. She could not find what ever her choice was. In this way, the existentialists conclude that human choice is subjective

because every individual must make their own choices finally without help from such external standards as laws ethical rules or traditions. Because individual make their own choices, they are completely responsible for their choices. In this regard Macintyre argues, “Even if I don’t choose, I have chosen not to choose” (149). The existentialists emphasize that freedom is necessarily accompanied by responsibility. Furthermore, since individuals are forced to choose for themselves, they have their freedom and therefore their responsibility thrust upon them Sartre says that they are condemned to be free. Veronica also has the right to make her own choices in the future. So, she wants to commit suicide.

Actually life hasn’t any unique values. It just goes whatever prediction about life is goes on. So, she thinks life as meaningless futile and worth living. Veronica’s disappointment at having survived, suicide is palpable. She imagines rest of her life filled with disillusionment, absurdity and monotony and vows not to leave Villatte alive. Fear, absurdity, depression are the reasons, she attempts to commit suicide for. Just as Albert Camus see this world full of absurdity. Camus believes in fraternity and humanism rather than in nihilism. Camus sees the condition of modern man similar to that of Corinthian King Sisyphus. At this point, the nature of Sisyphus can be compared to Veronica, who just sees the world in the views of absurdity. Sisyphus is the martyr and teacher of all modern man who because of his disobedience to God and his passion for life suffers eternal torture heroically. “This Universe”, Camus states, “henceforth without a master seems to him neither sterile nor futile” (131). Camus reached to the conclusion to declare the condition of man absurd when he realized that the speculative system of past provided no reliable guidance for life. In this novel also, however she learns that a fate, she desires awaits her any way: she is

destined to die within a week's time of a heart damage caused by her suicide attempt. Gradually this knowledge changes Veronica's perception of death and life.

Every individual is not free from other things. He/she is related towards society. So, Veronica tries to define her meaning of life in terms of her existence. Sartre emphasizes on this point upon the subjectivity of the individual. When he/she becomes conscious of Cartesian Cogito, 'I think therefore I am.' He also becomes aware of others that constitute his whole beings. Sartre writes, "The other is indispensable to my existence and equally so to any knowledge, I can have of myself. It is obvious that if the consciousness of a man embodies the consciousness of other being in front of him than his existence is in the world of 'inner-subjectivity'. But man has to make his own universe with meaning of his own universe with meaning of his own, realizing the fact that there is no of priori meaning of anything in the world. This project, according to Sartre, can be done only through commitment. There is no reality, Sartre claims, except in action. The unused knowledge and potentialities do not count for the existentialists. To act authentically we must take our responsibility for our future. For an authentic living one must choose and make a commitment of the talent and capabilities just like Veronica's consciousness guidance her to commit suicide.

After knowing the fact that about existence of human being and should have to this universe is the second reason, behind her suicide attempt. It is linked with the social injustice, chaos, daily criminal events that were going on in the world. She takes blame for all to herself while couldn't manage sound and well. She relates her living existence towards meaningful life to make world better but the world haven't moved according to her existence in the universe:

The second reason was more philosophical; Veronica read the newspaper, watched TV and she was aware of what was going on in the world. Everything was wrong and she had no way of putting things right-that gave her sense of complete powerlessness. (6)

In this point, Veronica seems like a coward who could not give the meaning of life herself. The existentialist says that the cowards makes himself cowardly, the hero makes himself heroic and that there is always a possibility for the coward to give up cowardice and for the hero to stop being a hero. Veronica has the full right to make her life meaningful. She blames to herself not to putting right in order so in the means of existentialist she is coward who makes herself cowardly:

In fact, life is not what we expect. Veronica claims to have chosen suicide in order to achieve “freedom, at last, internal oblivion.” She adds her birth of life to spiritual freedom. She seeks for existence for spiritual freedom in cost of death. She had no idea but she thought that she was about to find out the answers to the question that everyone asked themselves; does God exist? (7)

Veronica wants her meaning of life in terms of God also. She is about to find the answer of existence of god. But in the views of Nietzsche, even to think of God is to go against life against the will to power. As there is absence of God in the world, the superman is the Gods. The supermen are higher men who declare war over the masses of inferior men and are free from any restrictions imposed by the society. On the other hand, Veronica’s search of meaningful life interms of God’s existence to get spiritual freedom itself is like an instrument for taking measurement. As Nietzsche writes:

The subjective intentions and activities of individual and repudiated objective knowledge and truth, if a man troubles his mind on what

others will think about him, he will be no more a man but an instrument, an object. As a mirror he is work of art, to be handled carefully and honored. But he is not an aim, not a way out nor a way up, not a complementary human being thorough whom the rest of existence is justified, not a conclusion [...] or content, a self-less man.

(817)

Veronica is just 24 years old when she makes an attempt of suicide. At twenty-four, having experienced everything she could experience and that is so small achievement. Veronica is almost certain that everything end with death. That is why she has chosen suicide; freedom at last Eternal oblivion:

If God exists, and I truly don't believe he does, he will know that there are limits to human understanding he was the one who created this confusion in which true is poverty injustice, greed and loneliness. He doubtless had the best of intentions, but the result have proved distrous; if God exists, he will be generous with those creatures who choose to leave this earth early and he might even apologies for having made us spend time hare. (7)

Human being lives totally not by any single action or commitment but they by the whole action that he chooses to carry out in his life. The authenticity of life demands it to make a free choice, regardless of pre-established social values. To think about the social or moral duties is to indulge in the self deception, or "bad faith". But Sartre does not isolate the freedom of the individual from the total commitment of the community. The contradictory nature of Sartre's philosophy is mysterious because on the one hand he gives a total freedom to the individual and insists that he should not choose his freedom in accordance with the values or dogmas of society but, on the

other hand, he leaves the individual's freedom in relation with the freedom of his community so that the community's freedom directs him to act in certain ways. This contradiction might be the outcome of his gradual attraction towards, Marxism and later Neo-Marxism. Olafson in his "Sartre" analyzes that that moderate change in Sartre's later thinking shows that he has turned more and more toward a kind of dialectical sociology that seems very remote from the individualism which was the characteristics of his earlier moral theory. Olafson makes this argument more explicit as he says that out of Sartre's whole trust, there arise two options to choose and either of them difficult to maintain in isolation. The options are: either to choose his own liberty by suppressing others; which frames the good faith, or he should accept the liberty of other's repressing his own and adopt a bad faith. But both options are impossible because one is not immune from the intervention of another.

Veronica decides to die, but her suicide attempt goes wrongly and she wakes from a coma to find she will soon die from a damaged heart. Through the story of her remaining days, Coelho encourages the reader to believe in hope and follow his or her own dream without the fear of being seen as mad. She decides to take overdose of sleeping pills in order to stop that endless routine and takes her own life. This book tells her story after she struggles to live her last few remaining days appreciating every second of her life.

When she opens her eyes, Veronica doesn't think 'this must be heaven'. Heaven would never use a fluorescent tube to light a room and the pain which started a fraction of a second later was typical of the earth. She does not know now long she has slept. She remembers up at one point still with the life giving tubes in her mouth, nose and hearing a voice:

Since, I only took sleeping pills, I am not disfigured in any way; I am still young, pretty, intelligent I won't have any difficulty in getting boyfriend. I never did. I'll make love with them in their house, or in the woods, I'll feel a certain degree of pleasure but the moment I reach orgasm, the feelings of emptiness will return. (19)

In comparison of veronica's emptiness and absurd life Camus, says that when absurd man becomes aware of his futile living, he is naturally filled with anxiety and hopelessness but he does not surrender himself in the mouth of death. Instead, he acknowledges the consciousness of absurdity as a reliable guidance to revolt against it. The cocksureness of science for absolute reality and clarity has made the world more complex and inexplicable, terminating itself to a mere hypothesis. The only predictable truth is that the world is absurd and unintelligible. But suicide can not be the solution to the discomfort of absurd man if he is conscious of human pride which always negates the nihilistic attitude of life. Sisyphus continuously rolls the boulder up the hill that makes him happy because he is fully aware of his absurd task. Camus makes this explicit thus:

Suicide is repudiation. The absurd man can only drain everything to the bitter end, and deplete himself. The absurd is his extreme tension which he maintains constantly by solitary effort, for he knows that in that consciousness and in that day to day revolt he gives proof of his only truth which is defiance. (*Absurd Freedom* 846)

While thinking on the common condition of men Camus was also considering about human rights. The revolt against the injustice done upon man was a relevant as the revolt against the absurd condition. Sisyphus maintains at one and the same time

the revolts. The injustice done upon him by God has made him conscious of his absurd task.

On November 1997, Veronica decided that the moment to kill herself had- at last -arrived. She carefully cleaned the room that she rented in convent, turned off the heating, brushed her teeth and lay down. During the night, however she began to feel afraid. It was one thing to die quickly after taking some pills, it was quite another to wait five days or a week for death to come, when she had already been through so much. Her heart was irreversibly damaged. There was a necrosis of the ventricle:

During her life, Veronica had noticed that a lot of people she knew would talk about the horrors in other people's lives as if they were genuinely concerned to help them, but the truth was that they took pleasure in the suffering of others, because that made them believe they were happy and that life had been generous with them. (25)

So, anxiety arises from the human being's realization that destiny is not fixed but is open to an undetermined future of infinite possibilities and limitless scope. The void of future destiny must be filled by making choices for which he alone will assume responsibility and blame. Anxiety is present at every moment of the existence of human being and it is a part and parcel of authentic existence. Anxiety leads the human being to take decisions and commitment. The human being tries to avoid this anguish through bad faith. But the free authentic human being must be involved in his own actions, responsibility and his being which is his own. Thus, the human being must be committed.

The human being disguises himself from freedom by self-deception, acting like a thing, as if he is a passive subject, instead of realizing the independent being as a pure human being, which is an illusive faith. In such faith, human being shelters

himself from responsibility by not noticing the dimensions of alternative course of action. The human being behaves as other demand of him by confronting to the standards of accepted values and by adopting roles designed for him. If so, the human being loses the autonomy of his moral will and his freedom to decide. In bad faith, the human being imprisons himself within in authenticity and unreal for he has refused to take the challenge of responsibility and the anxiety that comes along with his freedom.

After the effect of sleeping pills she starts to realize something different as mad person would want to do. She compares her power lessens and madness with other persons engaged in different professions as she says that “certain sportsmen were man, because they wanted to break records or that artists were mad because they led such strange insecure lives, different from the lives of normal people” (19).

She comes to realize that each and every person who do/does indifferent from the normal people are mad as the looks like. It is also became every existentialist are always seeking for the meaning of their life. So meaningless of their existence could be found in their identity. Fear, depression, frustration, irritation are the features for those who thinks their life as meaningless and fruitless. They are just a burden of this earth so, they haven't right to live meaninglessly. While she is waiting for death, Veronica started reading about computer science, a subject in which she is not in the least bit interested, but them that is in keeping with that she has done all her life, always looking for the earthy option, for whatever is nearest to hand, like that magazine, for example.

The human being thrown in the world is condemned to be free. He takes this freedom of being, the responsibility and guilt of his actions. Each action negates the other possible course of action and their consequences; so the human being must be

objective, universally true, and certain. The existentialists do not go with the traditional attempts to get the ultimate nature of the world in abstract system of thought. Instead, they search for what it is like to be an individual human being in the world. They point out the fact that every individual even the philosopher seeking absolute knowledge is only a human being. So, every individual has to confront important and difficult decisions with only limited knowledge and time to make these decisions. This human condition resides at the existentialists. They find human life as being basically a series of decisions that should be made with no way of knowing conclusively what he correct choices are. The individual most continually decide what is true from false; what is right from wrong; which belief to accept and which to reject, what to do and what not to do. "Yet there are no objective standards or rules to which a person can turn for answer to problems of choice because different standards supply conflicting advice." Therefore the individual must be decide which standard to accept and which ones to regret.

In this way, the existentialists conclude that human choice is 'subjective' because the individuals must make their own choices finally without help from such external standards as laws, ethical, roles or traditions. Because individuals make their own choices, they are because they choose freely, they are completely responsible for their regard as Macintyre argues, "Even if I do not choose, I have chosen not to chose" (149). The existentialists emphasize that freedom is necessarily accompanied by responsibility. Further more, since individuals are forced to choose for themselves, they have their freedom- and therefore their responsibility-thrust upon them. Sartre says that they are condemned to be free.

Moreover, she gets shocked by a line she read from a newspaper that shake her out of natural passivity (the tranquillizers) that has not yet dissolve in her

stomach. But Veronica is by nature, passive and for the first time in her life, it makes her ponder the truth of a saying that is very fashionable amongst her friends. Nothing in this world happens by chance:

It was her first normal day in a mental hospital. She left the ward, had some breakfast in the large refectory where men and women were eating together. She notices how different it was to the way these places were usually depicted in films- hysterical scenes, shouting people making demented gestures- everything seemed wrapped in an aura of oppressive silence; it seemed that no one wanted to share their inner world with strangers. (33)

“I am not here to preserve my life but to lose it” said by Veronica gives the idea of losing life (25). She had been unable to hold back her tears. She notices her heart growing rapidly weaker.

At this point, Veronica talks about the self. She just comes to know that fact of life existence due to self realization. Just as one of the great existentialist Jaspers views that the self does not exist as a transcendent reality constituting a separate world that is different from the world of our experience. Instead, there is only one world, which we may more properly appreciate as an appearance of the self. This existential exposition is supreme of all theoretical objective facts, but this supremacy does not lead us to a superiority being. Self is will in itself. The will is creative and it creates itself which is consciousness. The existential self is thus related to consciousness and to the world and therefore, to the historical situation in which it finds itself. Like other existential thinkers he rejects the self sufficiency of science and empirical observation and the seclusion of individual from communication with other being

(865). The individual can not live fully if there is no another being to communicate with him. Jaspers is very close with all things around him. He says:

We can not have objective possession of a truth that is the eternal truth, and because being-there is possible only with other being-there and existence can come into its own only with other existence.

Communication is the form in which truth is revealed in time. (886)

He wants to create a balance between rational and irrational movement of self. The truth is that is possess a perpetual question without which we turn back into the more or less dirty stereotype of self-satisfaction, which is inadequately thought. The possible truth and reality can sheath in despair, anxiety, suicide, and dark passion. The existential root is not destructive will but a salvation from nihilism because it preserves confidence through its movement just like happens in the case of Veronica's life.

Spending her life in a mental hospital in Villelte in Ljubljana, the capital of Slovenia she meets different inmates of the hospital who have a great impact on her life, like Zedka who is depressed in spite of having a losing family. Actually she is in search of a past lover but she has no clue where to find him and where to begin search. Then there is Mari a really successful lawyer who wished to do something different but she starts having panic attacks. Eduard with whom Veronica falls in love, he wishes to live his life in his own terms.

Veronica's struggle for existence when she has few days to live could be seems all through the novel. She used to think life as meaningless, futile and worth living after realizing life as a just routine works. She wants to fight against existence at any cost at the later part of the novel. She wants to take at her short span of life meaningfully. In this short span of life, she just understands what about of her

existence in the universe. So, reading a novel playing with piano, making love with Eduard, are the some her desires after realizing her short existence in the world.

She started researching into the existence of the soul, read a few books on occultism and then one day she stumbled on vast literature that described exactly what she was experiencing: it was called 'astral travel' and many people had already had the same experience. (46)

Paulo Coelho wants to know all the details of what had happened, because he has a genuine reason for finding out about Veronica's story. The reason is the following: he himself had been admitted into an asylum or rather mental hospital as they were better known. And this had happened not once, but three times, in 1965, 1966, and 1967.

The place where he had been interned was the Dr. Biros Sanatorium in Rio De Janeiro. Precisely why he had been admitted into hospital was something which, even today, he found odd, perhaps his parents were confused by his unusual behavior, half shy, half-extrovert and by his desire to be an 'artist' something that everyone in the family considered a perfect recipe for ending us a social outcast and dying in poverty.

Paulo laughed when he learned of the strange letter to the newspaper that Veronica had left behind, explaining that an important French magazine didn't even know where Slovenia was:

No one would kill themselves over something like that that's why the letter had no effect said this friend Veronica embarrassed. "Yesterday, when I checked in at the hotel, the receptionist thought Slovenia was a town in Germany. (68)

In this way on one hand, Veronica who is struggling or searching own identity within a few days to live but on the other hand she also wants to make love affair with

Eduard who is also a inmates in the hospital. Meantime Dr. Igor who is been appointed to check for Veronica consoles:

I've got a daughter your age when you were first admitted, full of drips and tubes; I kept wondering why a pretty young girl, with her whole life ahead of her, should want to kill herself. Then all kinds of rumors started flying around: about the letter that you left behind which I never believe could be the real motive, and how you didn't have long to live because of some incurable heart problem. I couldn't get the image of my own daughter out of my head: what of she decided to do something like that? Why do certain people try to go against the natural order of things, which is to fight, for survival whatever happens? (110)

Considering the difficulties to exist in paradoxical condition Kierkegaard describes that "existing is ordinarily regards as not very complex matter, much less an art, since we all exist; but abstract thinking takes rank as an accomplishment" (815). But really to exist, so as to interpenetrate "one's existence with consciousness, at one and the same time eternal and as if far removed from existence, and yet also present in existence and its process of becoming: that is truly difficult" (814).

Though Veronica has a fear of death approaching nearby so, she wants to live her remaining life whatever she does. After realization of precious value of life, she still deserves a suitable person to choose for love affair with Eduard to whom she engages for making affairs. How does she realize the remaining portion of life and earlier life? This may be the gap between her intention and decision if she knows what about the values of life in earlier phase, she couldn't attempt for suicide. Now, the changes of idea, feelings brought up by self realization: "You only man on the

face of the earth with whom I could fall in love, Eduard, for similar reason that, when I die, you will not miss me. I didn't know what a schizophrenic feels, but I'm sure they never miss anyone" (119).

After all, she knows that fact that she is going to die within few days, but feeling, emotions, could expressed by her as a human beings. By knowing the fact about her death nearby she wouldn't want to miss Eduard in a reaming days.

And I won't miss you either Eduard, because I will be dead far from here and since I am not afraid of losing you. I don't care what you think or don't think what about me. Tonight I played for you like woman in love. It was wonderful. It was the best moment of my entire life. (119)

So, the human being cannot find any purpose in life; his existence is only a contingent fact. His being does not emerge from necessity. If a human being rejects the false pretensions like, the illusion of his existence having meaning, he encounters the absurdity and the futility of life. Therefore, man's human being's role in the world is not predetermined or fixed: every person is compelled to make choice. Choice is the thing that human being must make. The trouble is that most often the human being refuses to choose. Hence he cannot realize his freedom and the futility of his existence. Rayan thus summarizes this concept:

Man is free and responsible, but he is responsible only to himself. As with Nietzsche, man creates moral values. Besides being free, man is a finite and contingent being, existing in a world that is devoid of purpose. The pessimism resulting from this position is likewise expressed by Camus' doctrine of "the absurd". Absurdity or

contradiction arises from the clash between human hopes and desires and the meaningless universe into which man has been thrown. (639)

In this way, Rayan focuses on the freedom of choice and responsible that is for himself only. Moreover, he finds man as a finite being and shows the human limitation too like Coelho's *Veronica Decides to Die*.

Veronica's search for meaningful life from the very beginning of the novel is seen when she desires to know the world in depth. She has the passion for meaningful life. So, she starts thinking about her life, to what extent her meaning of life is there. To search for meaning of life, she goes to watching TV, observing daily events in the world that she finds all things is not in order. She blames to her own life after not to maintain well in order. And she becomes start to disappoint. Other thing that also disappoints her that life is just a routine works. She takes a sleeping pills and wants to commit suicide. Though, she has a wonderful job, loving family, plenty of boy friends, she is young and beautiful. But her attempt to commit suicide leads her to understand existence of life only she has few days to live.

This book has definitely inspired or changed the lines of many people who are in such Veronica understanding of life. It is a book that always makes us to think to appreciate life. Coelho has a gift for writing books, which changes the way we think about life in general. This book is undoubtedly a phenomenon. It is a wonderful although bizarre declaration of love to all mad people in our world and to the life itself, the way it alters her way of thinking and seeing the world. How she starts to question all her ideas about life? Soon she comes to realize that every second of existence is a choice we all make between living and dying. The way Veronica explores her life is inspirational. It also offers an interesting insignificant into how people deal with mental illness.

IV Conclusion

The research work analyzes Veronica's life struggle or existential struggle. Veronica realizes the importance of existence in her life when she has just few days to live. Veronica, who took determined and devoted steps for life, is thwarted by an increasing awareness that life is a series of routine works and meaningless facticities. But Veronica ironically comes to realize the precious value of each and every moment of her life when she has short span of time to live. We experience many emotions and realizations in Veronica's journey during the remaining five days of her life. We are treated to what her life would have been if she allowed her heart and allowed her emotions and passions to shine through.

After an unsuccessful attempt for suicide, Veronica awakens in a mental hospital with a grim death sentence hanging over her head of only having five days left to live. Her conformist way of life, her mediocrity, her stifled creativity as well as her unwillingness to take risk of challenges are brought into the limelight for us to "feel".

Veronica has everything she could wish for young and pretty, with plenty of attractive boyfriends, a steady job, and a loving family. Yet Veronica is not happy but, what she is looking in the world couldn't find in her life. Whatever she wants to do, wants to mean, all seems to be meaningless in terms of her existence in the world. She is in depression about of her life that she finds all the things, in chaos, disorder. She has psychological pain, fear, anxiety while looking to the world and blames to herself because she compares her life in the world in the eyes of her existence. She wants to make it meaningful life but could not success. She hasn't any option to get rid of such depression than to kill herself. So, one winter's morning she takes an overdose of

sleeping bills, and to wake up some time later in the local hospital. There she is told that although her heart is now irreparably damaged she has only few days to live.

Her failure attempt for suicide follows her, through these intense days as she starts to question all her ideas about life soon she comes to realize that every second of existence is choice we all make between living and dying. This is a moving and uplifting song to life that reminds us that every moment in our lives is special and precious.

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