

Comodification of Women in Paulo Coelho's *Eleven Minutes*

Based on Paulo Coelho's *Eleven Minutes*, this research deals with the issue of comodification of women. Maria, the protagonist of the novel goes to Switzerland to find her good fortune and wants to be rich. There she happens to work in a sex industry as a sex worker. The capitalist society buys and sells the women as commodity. The increasing of consumer culture in capitalism exploits the women labor in terms of sex work. Furthermore, the women are cheated and trapped in the way that there is no alternative way to escape from this scenario therefore the women have to choose this profession as a 'sex worker'. The women are exploited and dominated in the capitalist society in such a manner that women have no value in this world. Women are always placed in the 'objective' position and only taken as men's 'sexual object'. Sometimes it is seemed that only low profile job is made for women to sustain in the world. This research examines the women's comodification by capitalist society with the lights from Marxist point of view. It is the poverty that demoralizes the human value. In other words the gender discrimination and the patriarchal society play the role of women comodification.

Women's bodies are objectified and comodified throughout our capitalist and patriarchal society. Like other commodity, women's bodies or body parts are used to attract buyers and calm customers. So even many 'normal' jobs done by women could be seen as being to some extent sex work. There are the jobs more usually understood as sex work, which are varied from stripping, pole dancing or lap dancing, erotic message, dirty talking, fetish work, sadism, bondage and selling sexual service. Involvement in sex work could be seen from two perspectives: economic deprivation and free choice. Economic deprivation for the participating in sex work is growing

day by day. Born in the backward rural part of Brazil, the protagonist is the full of materialist dream like earn money and spend to luxurious life. Her dream is not possible to be fulfilled in the Brazilian context. The novel *Eleven Minutes* represents the pathetic condition of the modern youths especially working class 'women' in modern capitalist society. In the capitalist society women are exploited in terms of their labor and wages. The labor power of women is somehow commodified by 'short term job' limited within 'eleven minutes'. So the work to be performed in just 'eleven minutes' is so pitiable in this time to sustain in the world.

Coelho through his novel *Eleven Minutes* attacks the commodification of women in capitalist society through the protagonist 'Maria'. Born in the interior part of Brazil, the protagonist life standard is not so good. She has the dream of uplifting their economic status. Her economic background is not good since her parents are not well enough. Her father was a travelling salesman and her mother was a seamstress. In the search of good fortune she finds the way to Switzerland through the Swiss tourist. To fulfill her dream it is necessary to cross the superstition and the entire household boundary that is woven around her. She is somehow success to break the boundary but that success ends in Switzerland when she engages in sex work.

The novel shows different love affairs of the protagonist. None of her love affairs could be successful rather she thinks that "love was something very dangerous"(5). After her second attempt of love she realizes that "men brought only pain, frustration, suffering and a sense of time dragging"(13). Moreover, she decides not to fall in love again "because love spoiled everything"(13). Because of her frustrations and failures in love, Maria decides not "to fall in love again" (15). At the age of nineteen when she starts working in a draper's shop, she does not let herself be swept by the love of the owner of that shop by any means. After working two years

she could save enough money to go and spend a weeks' holiday in the city of her dream. This visit changed her the way of life. There she happened to meet two 'agents' who were there in search of young, beautiful and innocent woman. When any girl in their night club marries or escapes they flew to Brazil to find another suitable girl. There they propose good salaries and want to impress the Brazilian women to work in the 'night club'. They proposed her good work and 'dollars'. With the hope of being a great 'Samba Star' she accepts the proposal and signs the contract paper.

With the hope of being a 'Samba Star' she stepped into Switzerland. But when she reached there, she knew that she was cheated. She got paid barely a tenth of what they agreed. There either she could escape or got the salary what they signed. Sometimes, Maria's character seems vacillating when insecure. For instance, when she is fired by Roger, she considers going to her Arab boyfriend whom she knew in a French-course class.

When she has no job, she wonders in search of good job. At last she makes her mind to be a model; takes some photos for this purpose and sends them to her family. She thinks that they would all think she was rich and the owner of an enviable wardrobe, and that she had been transformed into her town's most illustrious daughter (48). She keeps reminding herself that she is an adventurer. She can find a way out of every trouble she encounters. Maria meets another Arab man who calls her from a model agency supposing he wants her to work with him in a fashion show. The Arab man proposed her to spend a night with him. She accepts his proposal and receives one thousand francs as a service to him. Then, Maria starts to ponder over becoming a sex worker. In her view point there was nothing to lose if she decide to become a prostitute for a while. This shows the condition of the protagonist lacking the money in Switzerland. The novel depicts the exploitation of women in Geneva. There no

women were in the state of using their freedom. Women were there from different part of the world to gain money by 'utilization' of their body. The more clients with whom they would go in one night the more money they could be got, but fix amount of money was deduced by the owner as a commission. Most of the women present there gather from the backward part of the world. The youth and beauty of woman was exchanged there in monetary value. In other words, women were comodified as an object, every night they were sold more than one time in the hope of good fortune. They have a dream of their life that after collecting a good sum of money return home and married with 'Prince Charm' and spend a happy life. After working about nine months in sex industries, with handful money with her, Maria returns Brazil thinking she becomes successful to fulfill her dream.

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

In Maria, Coelho has created a strong sensual young woman who grabs our sympathy from the first, as she suffers unrequited love as a child, learns a bit about sex as a teenager and, at 19, makes the ill-advised decision to leave Rio on a Swiss stranger's promise of fame and fortune. Maria's trialsand triumphs as she goes from restaurant dancer to high class prostitute is the highlight of the novel. (11)

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

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

Apparently, Coelho's book helps people for which they seem everlastingly grateful. He makes an astute (very good) choice in having the main character in his book, which honors sex, be a prostitute. Though Maria we are able to see some of the ugliest sides of sex. But it is through her development as a character that we are to appreciate the beauty of sex. (76)

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

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

Although Coelho's books deal with the metaphysical subjects of finding yourself and gaining spiritual insight, Coelho tells his stories like a village bard. His personal experiences make their way into his books, which he writes in Portuguese. In *Eleven Minutes*, he seems

unable to resist his tendency to preach and much of the book becomes his opinion, his take on how things are and should be. (33)

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

Anna PavlovaMurta finds Maria's journey of Switzerland to learn core truth of the human conditions. She further says that:

Eleven Minutes deviates from Coelho's usual 'light' topics by portraying international human trafficking, prostitution and sadomasochism. For which the author apologizes profusely to the reader in a forewarning preface. However the narrative is less of an underworld expose and more the typical self-realization journey in which Maria learns core truth of the human conditions by navigating through that said underworld. (74)

Murta states that Coelho departs from the usual 'light' subject to human trafficking, prostitution and sadomasochism to teach the real truth of human condition. To teach the real meaning of human life Coelho appoints Maria as a protagonist.

Several criticisms have been done previously on the novel *Eleven Minutes*. Some of them are mentioned above. The above mentioned critics state how a virgin girl has chosen the profession of sex work openly. This research is somehow related with these criticisms; however, it deals with the issue of commodification of women. The women from the backward part of the world in the hope of money trafficked into the brothel of Europe. The novel depicts the issue of binary opposition of men and women, exploitation of labor power, and commodified of women in the capitalist

society. In the capitalist society it is growing the commodity culture. As other goods in the market the women are treated as an object to fulfill the male sexual desire. The discrimination of women on the basis of gender and class, commodification of women in capitalist society are worth to overlook in humanities and social science research.

Comodification of the body may be common, but differences in how it is comodified. Sometimes the comodification may be a service, a detachable part of the body, or a regenerative part of the body is being sold. Sex work is mostly grown in the capitalist society. Under capitalism, there are women and men, who are desperate for money to survive. People are unemployed, or wages are low, so some women resort to selling their body. The means of production is in the hand of bourgeois so the proletarians are exploited in terms of wages, gender and sex. Most of the sex industry is the product of capitalist society in order to gain profit. The society takes women as inferior then men; their freedom is captured and not independent as men in terms of economy. The wages are lower than men and not considered their agency. Taking this point into account, the researcher explores sex work in capitalism using some of the models of Marxism. Male counterparts expend money for women to fulfill their sexual desire. Men are in the position of 'user' who spends money and the women are being 'used' to gain some economic gain for a certain period of time. When the protagonist, Maria, engaged into sex work to earn money, the researcher studies the capitalistic tendency of commodity culture, has both a use value and an exchange value. The major argument of this research is ...Women are comodified in capitalist society to fulfill male sexual desire... will be substantiated in frame of Marxist Feminist. This proposed research work also examines the binary opposition between male and female, her comodification by capitalist society.

Marxist feminists have contributed to the analysis of prostitution and capitalist culture of commodification. The involvement of the protagonist into sex work is analyzed in the light of Marxist Feminism. The protagonist's body is hired paying money by the male clients for their sexual desire for 'eleven minutes'. The objectification theory is proposed by Barbara Fredrickson and Tomi-Ann Robert in 1997. According to Fredrickson and Robert "sexual objectification is the experience of being treated as a body (or collection of body parts) valued predominately for its use to (or consumption by) others" (*Objectification Theory*:174). Even many 'normal' jobs done by women could be seen as being to some extent sex work. One of the prominent Marxist feminist Susan Edwards puts her idea on *Body Matters* that "women who sells sex become prostitutes in the commodity exchange of sex for favors in kind or for money". She further puts her idea that "prostitution as rising from the need women have to sell the body because of deprivation, although, apart from seeing men as the class with the money" (91). In *Feminist Political Theory*, Valerie Bryson argues that "Women has become a packaged, feminized, marketable commodity, and has thus become alienated from her own self and her own sexuality..."(66). She further stated that "the subordination of women coincided with the first private property and class society, for it was then that women lost control in the home and became economically dependent upon men" (59).

The commodification of femininity is a term to describe how the capitalist behaves towards women for the purpose of selling and exploiting of women. A twenty two year Brazilian woman goes to Switzerland in search of employment and realizes that the easiest and fastest way to earn money is through prostitution. Many women are engaged in different forms of prostitution to earn money. Radical feminism strongly opposes prostitution because it dehumanizes or degrades the female members of the

society. Radical feminism also criticizes prostitution because it increases the power politics that is played by the male members of the society. One of the radical feminist Kate Millett argues that "sex with men is oppressive because it is unfulfilling, it is not freely chosen and it is used as a means of dividing and controlling women" (Bryson, *Feminist Political Theory*: 191). Marxist claims that male dominates women in all areas of society. Capitalist relations of production are relations of capitalist exploitation. This exploitation is accomplished by way of an extortion of surplus value consecrated by the limits of the wage relation(Althusser 41).

Sexual commodification is the act of treating a person as an object of sexual desire. Materialist analysis of prostitution has focused on the system of capitalism. The women are commodified in the capitalist society with different manner. In the novel Maria is commodified differently. First she is objectified as a 'samba dancer' then shifted to a 'sex worker'. During the period of sex worker, Maria has tackled different sorts of behavior. Different rules are made according to their benefit and the capitalist business is guided with the patriarchal ideology. In Engels' vivid phase "the man took command in the home also; the woman was degraded and reduced to servitude; she became the slave of his lust and a mere instrument for the production of children"(*Origin*: 65). This means that the subordination of women coincided with the first private property and class society, for it was then that women lost control in the home and became economically dependent upon men. Maria works in the sex industries as a sex worker. In most of the case the poor women are objectified. Economic pressures put the women to enter into these industries. As for Maria, money was one motivation (73) to work there. The women of poor economic condition are entered into the profession.

Comodification of women is the exploitation over women under capitalist society. The investor of sex industries is thoughtful for making profit. Either the owner pays low wages or increases the working time to make profit. Marx argued that "capitalism is a mode of production whose overriding objective is to produce, not objects of social utility, but surplus value and capital itself. That is what is meant by the common expression which has it that the driving force behind the capitalist regime is the profit motive" (Althusser 33). First the owner hires the women and then sold for the customers. The protagonist has been bid for three hundred and fifty franks for one session. The women in Copacabana are being generally sold three times in one night. When the women went three men a night the owner became happy (84). The payment is first received by the sex workers from the clients then they have to return fix amount to the owner. Exploitation has its primary effect in wages, but it has other specific effects in the practice of production itself, in the guise of the division of labor (34).

Comodification of women is the sale or rent of the body. If so what is the prostitute selling? It is not other than sexual services. Sexual services cannot be separated from the sale or rent of the body that supplies those services. When the clients pay for a woman, the client is buying the right to use a woman's body as he wishes, without any desire on her part. Once she has contracted to provide a particular service. She has to allow him to enter into her body, her vagina, her mouth, her anus, to put his hands all over her body, and she must do whatever she has contracted to do to his body with her hands and mouth. This is domination over women and the client plays the dominating role in the session. It is the client's power to determine that and how he gets sexual satisfaction from a prostitute that makes male domination central to prostitution. She must pretend to be enjoying it. One of the Maria's friends

Nyahsaid "When your client comes, you must always groan as if you were having an orgasm too. That guarantees customer loyalty. But why? They're paying for their own satisfaction "(79).

Thus what the client is buying is not only her body but also her emotions. If she just lies there and looks at her watch, he will not be satisfied; an important part of what he is buying is the appearance of her pleasure. His motivation may be to dominate a woman, to affirm his masculinity to himself or others, to have particular kinds of sexual experiences which he could not get from his wife. Why he pays a sex worker is he wants to have a "girlfriend experience" without responsibilities.

Coelho presents the pathetic condition of the protagonist, Maria. The writer pictures the rural part of the Brazil where there had only one cinema, one nightclub, and one bank. The economic condition of Brazil is not so good. People are living in the stricken poverty. The poverty drives the women into 'sex work'. The majority of those who sell sex are female, and the vast majority of the buyers of sex are male. This is in the context of a global capitalist crisis in which class inequality and poverty is growing, as well as gender inequality. Valerie Bryson in her *Feminist Political Theory* stated that "men have a higher standard of living than women in terms of luxury consumption; leisure time and personalized services' men of all classes have at least a short-term material interest in maintaining women's oppression, which pre-dates capitalism and could continue beyond it "(210).

Gender inequality is the other cause of commodification of women. Superiority and inferiority between men and women lead the exploitation of women. The huge rise in the sexist objectification of women's bodies, establish as a business of buying sex. This is a huge issue that shows gender inequality. This inequality is also seen in

the job off women. Susan Edwards claims that women are appointed as "gatekeepers". This 'gatekeepers' job could be seen in the novel. In *Eleven Minutes*, Maria engaged in the socially low profile job as a 'sex worker'. She further says that "women are expected to be cognizant of men's inability to control their sex needs and are there by appointed as gatekeepers. Once women have failed to affect this gatekeeper function, for instance when battered, raped or abused by men, women are, at that moment, portrayed as masochistic" (*Body Matters*:91). This is the real scenario of the women. They rarely find the high profile job, otherwise only appointed as a low profile job.

The oppression of women has existed for many thousands of years under capitalism and an inequality was fostered through the ideology of the patriarchal family. The man at the head of the household controls the women's sexuality within the confine of marriage, where women are limited as a 'natural carer' for the family. The patriarchal society takes women as inferior than men. In the novel all the clients are married however they regularly visit the brothel (87). Their wives are limited in the household activities and have to be faithful to their husband. The man control women inside as well as outside the house. Valerie Bryson has argued that "in a patriarchal society, sex and love between men and women cannot exist on a basis of equality, for power and eroticism are inextricably entangled; they are therefore likely to involve at worst rape and violent humiliation, at best emotional dependency and the neglect of women's sexual needs" (*Body Matters* 188).

Poverty is another cause of commodification of women. When there is inequality in terms of economy. The poor are being used by rich as their wish. The fact that the majority of sex worker poor women. Maria is one of those women who engage in sex work for economic gain. The capitalist can sell parts of one's self without selling oneself. The same is true of sex; the only "commodity" a woman has

to offer on the market, but this should be understood as an expression of the poverty of her choices in our capitalist patriarchal system. Most of them are the victims of trafficking. Coelho presents the issue of women trafficking for 'erotic labor' in the novel. The innocent women are trapped and trafficked in another country. Maria is one of the victims of trafficking. Once she is trafficked she is commodified in Switzerland: at first as a samba dancer later as a 'sex worker. Once Maria said, "everyone needs money, but not everyone choose to live on the margin of society" (77). Susan Edwards in her *Selling the Body Keeping the Soul* stated that "prostitution as arising the need women have to sell the body because of economic deprivation, although, apart from seeing men as the class with the money, very little is offered by way of explaining the demand part of the equation" (91). The economic deprivation is the root cause of the involvement of 'sex work. The women came there for the same reason that is money.

Adolescence is likely to be the most transitional period of the girls. Most of the girls lost control and become the commodity to men from this period. In the novel, Maria is very watchful for her every physical changes. Whether it is her first menstruation or it is about her genitals change, she is very curious. She becomes most beautiful and many of her boyfriends proposed her. When the girls are changing into adolescent, the society keeps the eyes on girls. Every girl is evaluated and judged in terms of their physical appearance. Fedricken and Robert claims that "the cultural milieu of objectification functions to socialize girls and women to treat themselves as objects to be looked at and evaluated (177). Maria, in her adolescence period has collected the bitter love experience. When Maria was once in the dating, her boyfriend forcibly kissed her twice. "Don't you want to" (8)? After the boys remarks Maria is thoughtful.

What was she supposed to say? Did she want to? Of course she did! But a woman shouldn't expose herself in that way, not to her future husband, otherwise he would spend the rest of his life suspecting that she might say 'yes' that easily to anything. She decided not to answer. (8)

This remarks by Maria shows that there was someone superior to her to control over her life. Maria started to think that the wants of the boy and the girl is different. She loves the boy spiritually but the boy leaves her and starts to love one of Maria's friends. The boy betrays Maria since he is unfulfilled from Maria what he wants. This is how the women lose their subjective position from the adolescent period and to some extent the comodification of women is beginning. Maria, the protagonist lost her position from her early period when she grew older and become more attract then other girl she is receiving love and marriage proposal. Fredikson borrowing the idea of Unger argues that "physical beauty can translate to power for women: attractiveness functions as a prime currency for women's social and economic success" (179).

Maria is an extra girl among her friends. She has experienced different phase of her life. In the short period of time, she has got many experiences; fell in love, betrays in love, masturbation and even sex with boy friend. At the age of fifteen Maria was utilized by many so called 'boy friend' yet her love couldn't success. Girls are treated as the object in the society rather considered their agency. Once Maria said "... I see more clearly that how fragile men are, how inconstant, insecure and surprising they are... a few of my girlfriends' fathers have propositions me, but I've always refused. At first, I was shocked, but now I think it's just way men are" (16). This shows that Maria is not secure in the society in any conditions. The men in the society have the power to decide to have sex with women but not vice versa. This

shows how the society behaves the girls. Valeire Bryson on her *Feminist Political Theory* claims that "sexual behavior today is neither 'natural' nor freely chosen, but is bound up with ideas of ownership, domination and submission" (188). Thus women can't choose the sex but it is in the hand of the patriarchal society. When the society keeps the power to control over women, gradually the women are comodified.

The women herself possesses the weapon of comodification. It is the beauty that guides the women to be a commodity. The Swiss tourists, whom Maria met in the beach of Reo De Jenerio, is impressed with her was 'beauty'. Fedricken and Robert stated that "women are gazed at more than men and men's gazing is often accompanied by sexually evaluative commentary" (176). Maria is like a beautiful flower in the garden on that beach. When those two tourist approaches Maria they fascinated with her beauty. They are impressed and said, "Preeety" (20). Immediately they invite her for "supper". This invitation was the result of the beauty of Maria. The interaction between them is so interesting. "Switzerland". "Work!Dollars!" (20). But Maria refuses their proposal saying that I have a job.

Some feminist argue that love is the form of women's oppression. Shulamith Firestone argued that "Love, perhaps even more than child-bearing, is the pivot of women's oppression today and that love in a patriarchal society cannot be based upon equality, but reflects women's economic and social dependency and ensures that they will not challenge their subordinate position" (Bryson 178). Maria remembers her mother "Beauty, my dear, doesn't last"(17). With the utilization of her beauty she could increase the salary as well as paid overtime. Yet the boss tries to seduce her many times but she was alert in that case. "Women were economically exploited as women, rather than as gender neutral members of the proletariat. Poorpay and discrimination in the workplace were seen as both cause and effect of women's

economic dependency upon men" (Althusser 197). Maria always thought "He was only interested in sex: and yet, his eyes were saying the exact opposite: I can give you a house, a family, some money for your parents" (18). The beauty is the power of women. Sometimes the beauty works in the favor of women but rarely.

Maria becomes the victim of capitalism in early phase of life. The means of production remain in the capitalist's hands and they value the labor. The poor women compelled to work in the capitalist system to fulfill their need. They could not receive the amount as they wish. There has been rising the objectification of women and the commodification of women's bodies. According to Kate Millett "relationship between the sexes are based on power" (Bryson, *Body Matters*: 166). The investor is the sole person to determine the price of the production. When Maria was a child, she has an absurd dream of "meeting the man of her life, of getting married, having two children and living in a lovely house" (1). Therefore she wonders for searching the money. It's a product of a society that still has economic oppression and inequality. Women as objects and possessions, as well as the complex interplay of the societal promotion of other patriarchal notions about gender roles, such as men as the protector, provider and power-centre in the home. Inequality and economic oppression result the women's commodification. They are under the men inside the house and the lack of subjective position in the society. According to Marx "the capitalist concedes to his wage workers (contractually) only their wages, that is, only part of the value produced by their labor" (Althusser, *Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses*: 32). When Maria received the proposal of samba dancer, her rate of the dance was five hundred dollars a week but fix amount is reduced as a commission on the first payment. "That's a week's payment in advance. One week, you understand? You'll be earning five hundred dollars a week from now on, but with no deductions, because I only get a

commission on the first payment" (27). The women in the industries are hired by the owner and sell them making profit. Short term contract is made between the employer and the employee. When this contract is made the worker is lemmatized in work and they cannot go out of the contract.

The recruitment system in sex industries is different than other production industries. It is not the search of experience recruits rather the beginner's one. In other production industries the experience one's get more salary but in the sex industries the beginners earn more and the more experience earn less (78). The women under the age of twenty three are mostly comodified. The women who are above twenty three are asked to find another job. "They are replaced by new recruits. Then they moved to the Neon, then to the Xenium, and the price went down as the women's age went up" (81). The young and beautiful women are being comodified in the capitalist society. This is the actual condition of comodification. The early age sex worker gets more money than the late age (above twenty three). Marx had claimed that "as capitalism developed, employers would increasingly seek to simplify the labor processes and replace skilled with unskilled workers and that the entry of women and children into the workforce was a reflection of this process (Bryson, *Body Matters*: 208). It is the capitalist system to replace the skilled with unskilled labor. But the fact is just opposite in sex industries as Marx has claimed. One of the girls in the industries said "Prostitution isn't like other businesses: beginners earn more and the more experienced earn less. Always pretend you're a beginner" (78). The consumers are always in the search of the beginners then the experienced. And if the women are the beginners they have a chance of getting more clients in one night.

What the clients want from a sex worker is none other than the pleasure. To please the clients the sex worker has to do many things. The sex workers don't mind

who their client was and how they get up. But they only have think about how to give pleasure to their clients. According to Maria, most of her clients might not be able to get an erection.

If they went to a shop and didn't like the shoes they had bought, they would be quite prepared to go back, receipt in hand, and demand a refund. And yet, even though they were paying for some female company, if they didn't manage to get an erection, they would be too ashamed ever to go back to the same club. (87)

This means that the sex workers are concerned about to please their client in other ways. Maria always tried to put men at their ease. If the client is drunker or more fragile she used other means than full sex to utilize his money. The clients is only concentrated about his pleasure than his female partner since he paid for the women. Susan Edward in *Body Matters* noted that "prostitute women develop strategies or coping mechanisms to enable them to sell parts of their body in mechanistic transactions" (*Body Matters* 99). Masturbate and caresses are the strategies to sell parts of their body. Maria sometimes applies those strategies to please them very often. If the client is happy he doesn't hesitate to pay three hundred and fifty francs for a sex worker.

Comodification of women is growing in Switzerland. When Maria reached there, she found the reality and the fact is quite different. In the night club there worked many women. The women are brought there from different part of the world but their sole interest is to get 'money'. When one of the girls in the night club gets married, they fly to Brazil to search the girl for their night club. As Vivian said: 'Don't delude yourself. He flies off to Brazil whenever one of his dancers gets married,

something which seems to be happening more and more frequently. He knows what you want, and I assume you do too: you're probably looking for one of three things- adventure, money or a husband' (37).

The women came there from different part of the world has a similar aim but the reality was quite different than they hope. Maria got paid barely a tenth of what they agreed. There was no way of escaping from there. Maria was in the condition of imprison in foreign country. Neither she could understand the language nor could she know about the law. In other word, the women were exploited there. In the hope of earning money she dances in the night club seven nights a week. The owner is much careful about making more profit from his business. Only few amount of salary is paid for the dancer so that she could not escape from there. She is like the object in the night club to entertain the visitors.

The club was exactly as Vivian had said it was: it had a family atmosphere. The girls- described on their work permits as 'samba dancers'-were not allowed to accept invitations or to go out with the customers. If they were caught receive a note with someone's telephone number on it, they were suspended from work for two whole weeks(41). Though the club had family atmosphere, the women were receive the vulgar behavior. Maria is not allowed to accept invitations. There she is limited within the four walls of the night club. Her body is in the control of the owner and they have to work in the interest of their owner.

Women are comodified in sex industries. The growth of the sex industry has served to promote a view of sexuality that confines women as objects, their bodies as commodities, and as subjects of male sexuality. The sex industries treat the women differently. When she visits for works in the 'sex industries' there she approaches the

rules to be followed. The owner has made the certain rule of their business. In the first visit they are aware of the employee. And there is a chance of no coming the following day. So one of the women in the brothel said to Maria that "And start now. If you go home tonight without having got your first client, you'll have a second thoughts about it and you won't have the courage to come back" (68).

It is the actual condition of that place. If the employee is not interested to work in that place it is hard to find another girl. Therefore the employer doesn't want to miss the chance of getting of such type of young and beautiful girl. The owner is already known about the visit of Maria since why such women go there is they want money. Maria is in the search of a job in Geneva, but in that new country she is not aware of getting new job. Maria has already known about the 'profession' since she has spent a night with an Arab man and gets thousand franks. The sex industries under the capitalism have made different rules to be followed "Look, it's very simple; you just have to stick to three basic rules. First: never fall in love with anyone you work with or have sex with. Second: don't believe any promises and always get paid up front. Third: don't use drugs" (68).

The rules are rules itself but one thing is true that Maria has to be utilized by other. There she should be selected by the clients. The get up she would wear play the great role to impress the client. Every night she has to go with the new clients to earn money. Every process she has to be followed before going with the clients is more cleared by Milan. Maria could say first "would you like a drink?", then she should accept an invitation to dance, and last the costumer would invite her to back to the hotel. According to Marx "capitalism is a mode of production whose overriding objective is to produce, not objects of social utility, but surplus-value and capital itself. That is what is meant by the common expression which has it that the driving

force behind the capitalist regime is the 'profit motive" (33). Within the certain boundary of rules Maria has to perform her job.

The owner of the Copacabana is profit oriented and aware of his reputation. His reputation is in the hand of the women worked there. Copacabana was a pleasant place and most expensive place in Geneva. The client chooses the lady on their own. The normal price of women is three hundred and fifty franks for one session. Fifty franks went to Milan for the hire of the table i.e. as a commission. In other words, the relations of exploitation are not just expressed in terms of the extortion of surplus value, which is consecrated by wages and all the effects of the market economy. Exploitation has its primary effect in wages, but it has other specific effects in the practice of production itself, in the guise of the division of labor (Althusser 34). The women are exploited in terms of wages. The rate of woman labor is fixing by the owner and women are exploited in the working place.

The costumers of Copacabana were high reputed officials. They are tired of working and went to there for enjoyments. They have wives, children, and money yet not satisfied. The satisfaction and pleasure was there which could buy there. The high executives visit Copacabana in order to show that they are able to pay expensive money. It means that "female oppression has no other material cause – it is a part of class society, but not a necessary or permanent feature of human relationships. From this it follows that the abolition of private property will mean an end to sex oppression, for men will no longer have any motive to exploit women: "The supremacy of the man in marriage is the simple consequence of his economic supremacy and with the abolition of the latter will disappear of itself" (*Origin* 95).

Maria starts to ponder over becoming a sex worker. She thinks heedlessly not giving proper thought for the consequences. She wants to plunge into an unknown universe. She convinces herself that “she wasn’t in Geneva in search of pleasure, however, but work” (65). Coelho poses the subject of prostitution as if it is really a profession, above board simply like any other. Prostitution represents the interface of two arenas of power and powerless, gender and class. Rich man has always used abused, insulted and exploited poor women, working class women and black women. And bourgeois men have vociferously defended their privilege to exercise this power over all women (Susan Edwards 92). It is a hazardous world that is full of exploitation, manipulation and jeopardy. It is based on the objectification of the female body. In addition, people who work or control the sphere of this universe is surely people devoid of moral values. When Maria goes to work for the first time, she says that this is merely an “experiment” and that “she hadn’t felt so well or so free in all the time she had been in Switzerland” (66).

When Maria goes with her clients to a hotel, she has to spend with each one about forty five minutes. Out of this period of time, Maria demonstrates that “if you allow time for taking off clothes, making some phony gesture of affection, having a bit of banal conversation and getting dressed again, the amount of time spent actually having sex is about eleven minutes” (88). These eleven minutes are devoted to the customers. Thus, most of the forty five minutes is devoted to the soul. Maria's job is to “know precisely which points to touch on both body and soul, but mainly the soul give some advice on personal problems, be his friend for half an hour, of which eleven minutes would be spent . . .” (88). It is her persistence not to forget that she is “not only a body with a soul, but a soul that has a visible part called the body” (75).

So much emphasis on love and soul in this novel of prostitution! Maria says that “the only word that is more important than the eleven minutes is . . . loved” (92).

In Copacabana every girl has special clients. Special clients were the customers who visit regularly, pay three hundred fifty francs to one thousand francs, wore new clothes, and special clients have only one girl in their eye. Ralf Hart was one of those special clients. The writer tries to show the relation of Maria and Ralf Hart as spiritual. But one cannot pay for spirituality. Rather it is not like the commodification of women since Ralf has to pay three hundred and fifty francs. Spirituality is not the thing that could buy or sell. Maria has played the double role. She is intellectual then the other women in the club so she has to be more clients. Sometimes she gives the 'psychological' treatment to her clients. Sometimes she arouses the emotion whose interest is dead. So, she is special there and has more personal clients.

Terence is another special client to the club where Maria works. His relation with Maria is sadomasochistic. Maria is humiliated by the special client in different manner. In sadomasochism, there is a kind of domination-surrender relationship. The sadist is the dominator; the masochist is the dominated. Susan Edward noted that "the masochist clientele is something of a special breed; generally they're men who are cultured, who've got money and who've got some pretty incredible vices. They want us to hit them, stub cigarettes on their chest, stick pins through their penis, drag them round the room..." (*Body Matters* 100). As a special client, Terence has the right to do whatever he likes in exchange for one thousand francs. Hence, he is the sadist and the dominator. Susan Edward borrows the idea from Ellis to describe the sadistic and masochistic aspects. Ellis argued that "there are two separate groups of feelings: one, in the masculine line, the other, in feminine line, which delights in submitting to that force, and even finds pleasure in a slight amount of pain" (*Body Matters* 95). Yet

masochism is also constructed by patriarchy. Only then, she understands what a special client like Terence wants; "Punish her! Special client! In a flash, she understood everything, took the thousand francs out of her bag and put it down on the desk" (146).

The world of sadomasochism is brand new for Maria. This commodification in reality is like a play in drama.

. . . When the theatre curtain goes up, the play will begin and cannot be stopped. If it does stop, it is because our souls are incompatible.

Remember: it is a play. You must be the person you have never had the courage to be. Gradually, you will discover that you are that person, but until you can see this clearly, you must pretend and invent (149).

Maria is a mere object to the man before her. He possesses and objectifies her because he buys her to do that. He has the authority to beat her, touch her, handcuffs, and whatever he likes. Theweleit presents his examination on male fantasy on women. He further said that "male objectification of women, male desire, and male sadism are all interlinked in this account" (Susan Edwards, *Body Matters*: 97). Maria starts to think herself as instruments for others' desire. Her behavior and life style change in a short period of time. Within six months she could save sixty thousand francs in Swiss bank. She is thoughtful to her dress up. She regularly visits the library. She asks the book about 'sex'. Watch porn movie to be professional. That means she has no lamentation on the selection of 'sex worker'. Barbara Fredrickson and Tomi-Ann Roberts proposed the notion of self-objectification. According to them "self-objectification is the process whereby women and girls learn to think of themselves as instruments for others' desire".

In Coelho's novel, there are some passages that reflect women's dependency on men and their lack of agency. For example, one of these passages shows the nature of the first relationship between Adam and Eve; "Original sin was not the apple that Eve ate, it was her belief that Adam needed to share precisely the thing she had tasted. Eve was afraid to follow her path without someone to help her, and so she wanted to share what she was feeling"(210). Coelho also presents the myth about the creation of man and women. This clarifies about the commodification of women. At 'the beginning of creation', according to Plato:

Men and women were not as they are now; there was just one being, who was rather short, with a body and a neck, but his head had two faces, looking in different directions. It was as if two creatures had been glued back to back, with two sets of sex organs, four legs and four arms. (159)

This shows that when the Greek gods separated this creature, men and women spend more time to search for their lost half. Later in history, the searching of half part transformed into 'sex work'. The capitalist society treats the lost half part as the commodity and transformed into business. The half part of the creature is being selling and buying in the present time too. Coelho presents the sacred prostitution through history and how it has transformed into something of despicable nature in our modern times; "Nowadays, men control the world, and the term serves only to create a stigma, and any woman who steps out of line is automatically dubbed prostitute" (207). Here, Coelho talks about prostitution and prostitutes in contemporary terms. There is a condescending look at prostitutes simply because patriarchy portrays their job as something irreverent and profane after it was sacred.

Coelho presents objectification of women during the scientific investigation. The male scientists and researchers study about the different part of women's body. In 1559 a doctor, Realdo Columbus first describes "a pretty and a useful thing" in his book entitled '*De re anatomica*' [*On Things Anatomical*]. Two years later, in 1561, Gabriello Fallopio, said he had "discovered" (222). The 'discover' was nothing than 'Clitoris' and 'G-spot.' "But just as an Italian discovered the clitoris and G-spot is a twentieth-century discovery" (243). These two men are etched in the history books for discovering the women's body. This shows the comodified and objectified of women from science. History is also biased to women for a long period of time. Women are being exploited in the era of science and technology. Women's bodies have long been sites of patriarchal control. This provides another venue for men to exert control over women's bodies. The 'violet rod' which was one of the latest instruments of science, used to arouse the emotion to women and helps to self pleasure is also experiment into woman. This instrument was developed especially for women Therefore science is also not women friendly.

To wrap up in Coelho's *Eleven Minutes*, women are comodified from the capitalist tendency of consumer culture. Poverty, gender discrimination, patriarchal social structure and personal ambition are responsible to comodify the women. It is none other than the capitalist system to comodify the women. Capitalism includes private property, capital accumulation, wage labor, short term job, voluntary exchange, a price system and competitive markets. Capitalism established power in the hand of a minority capitalist class that exists through the exploitation of working class majority.

The novel *Eleven Minutes* deals with how women are comodified in the capitalist society. The novel hovers around the protagonist's, Maria, trail and triumph

in Switzerland. This research is only centers around the capitalist manner towards women and women's commodification. All have accepted that sex industries are growing day by day. But only fosters in the developed and capitalist countries. Since in capitalist society there is the consumer culture. The consumer culture behaves the women like an object thus women are commodified. So this growing industries impact the poor and innocent women in the developing countries.

Prostitution is a response to poverty and a particular exploitation of women. Money attracts women to enter in such profession. The woman who sells their sex is objectified in the sex industries. Women are gathered in such industries from different parts of the world where there is poverty. The other reason of commodification of women is the 'patriarchal society.' In the patriarchal society the women get the objective position. Thus women are treated as a mere object. Bryson claims that women's economic dependence upon men may be the cause as well as the consequence of their sexual subordination (*Feminist Political Theory* 195). The protagonist of the novel is one of the victims of the patriarchal society.

The purchase of a women's body for sexual use is the commodification of women and their sexuality. Nothing is produced in prostitution. The commodity created the sexuality of the prostituted women. Prostitution is the commodification of sexual relations, taking it out of the sphere of mutual pleasure and into the domain of the market. Quite apart from the damage done to women, this commodification of sexuality affects men as well. It fosters the notion that better sex can be bought for more money and an attitude that sex is a service which women provide for them.

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