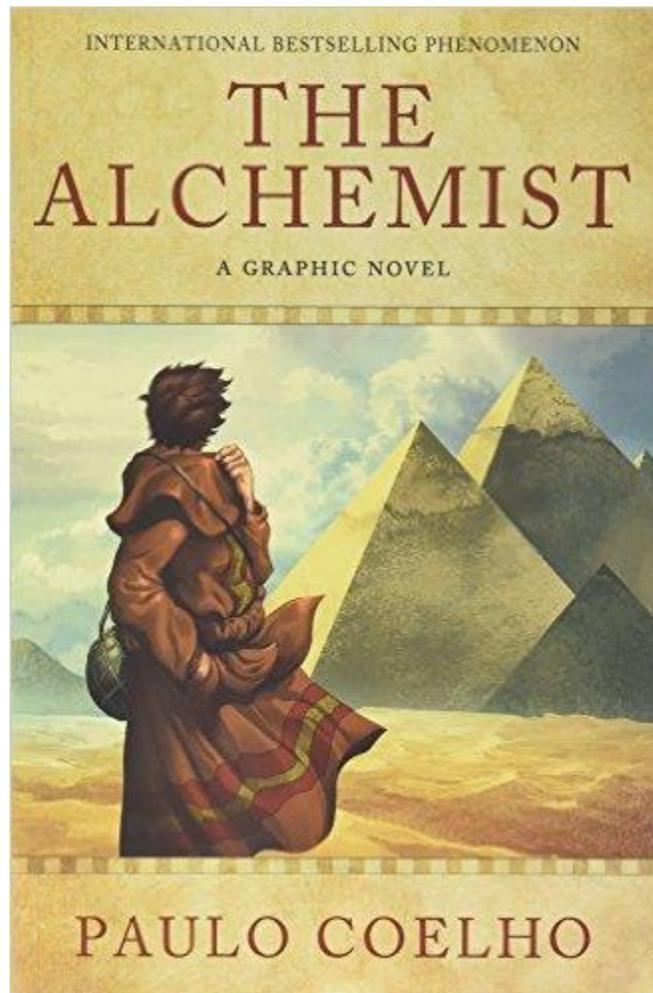


Are All the Souls the Same? A Spiritualistic Study on
Paulo Coelho's *The Alchemist*

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Abstract

Nowadays, people have a goal and work towards achieving that goal all through their life, even though many people simply ignore it and live the life they have. Very few bother about all their losses and strengthen themselves to face the new life by listening to the words of their heart

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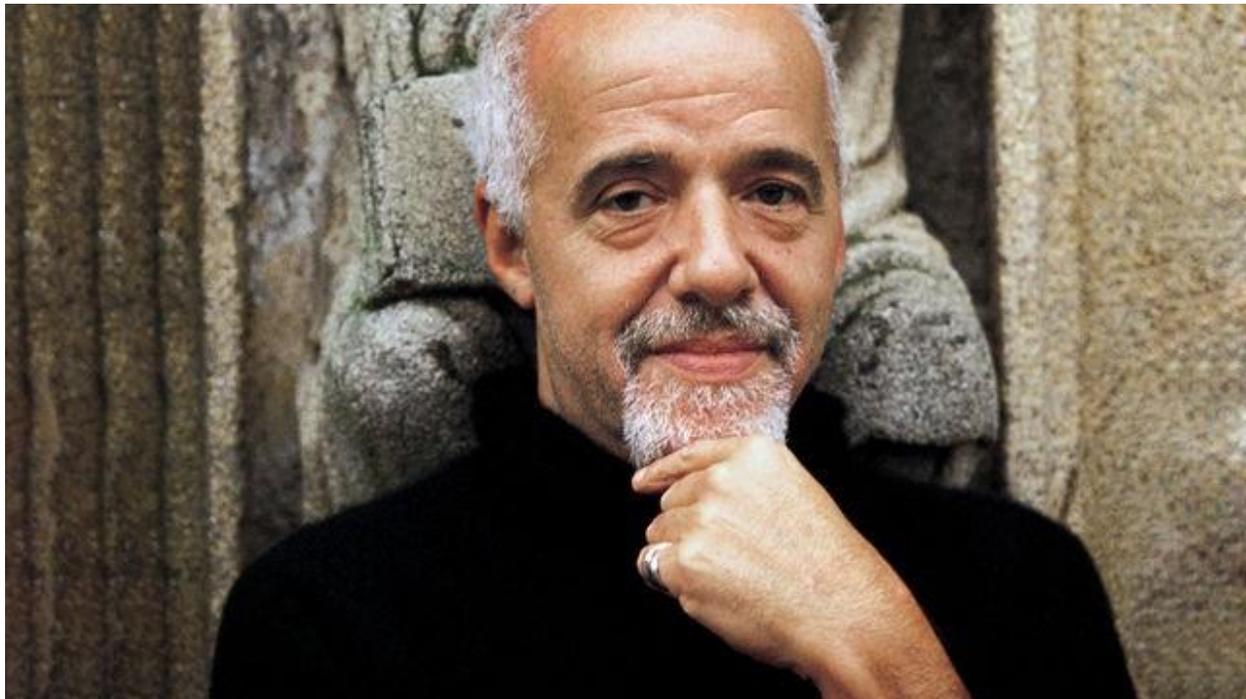
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to achieve their goal. According to Paulo Coelho in his novel, *The Alchemist*, it may be possible only when we listen to the words of the soul that exists everywhere. The present paper traces spiritualistic result that the souls in the world are same or not.

Keywords: Paul Coelho, Shepherd boy, recurrent dream, journey, soul of the universe, treasure.

Paulo Coelho



Paulo Coelho

Courtesy: <https://motivationgrid.com/amazing-paulo-coelho-quotes-change-life/>

Like man, every living thing has its own soul. The soul is a synthesis of the psychical and the physical in all humans. It is an in-built thing which acts at the time of revelation about the existential form of the being. One can reveal his own existentiality by listening to his heart that always tries to direct to the person. This soul can be the answer to: Who is he? What does he needs to be? And for what is he fit for in the world?

Paulo Coelho, a writer from the travelling generation claims that journey is an unavoidable one in everyone's life to attain their own selfhood. According to him, journey is not

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a process to reach the destination but to experience the travel. Through the physical journey, one can understand the whole world and his kinship with it in his mind and also direct one to the journey of the mind. It is also one of the sources for the author to claim that the journey is a needed for one to know one's self. Due to his own experience in the travel, Coelho professes the journey as one of his major themes in all his successful novels. At the first after some failures in writings, he lightened his writings in the book, *The Pilgrimage* which asserts the theme of journey in an autobiographical style.

While penning his own experiences in his novels, Paulo Coelho has clearly estimated his characters that are preoccupied with some quest. In *The Pilgrimage*, he has depicted his role mainly with his experiences during the pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela which made him reveal his preoccupied role as a writer. Most of his characters took the journey toward the worlds of their souls. Almost this might have been a journey to the unknown, but with trust in them.

The Alchemist

Similarly in his second book, *The Alchemist*, Paulo Coelho depicts the story of an Andalusian shepherd boy, Santiago who travels by listening to his omens. Omens are the words of the universe that is created by a soul. This book requires most of the readers' reading time by its content and the interesting supplements. In the story, Santiago who accepted himself happily as a shepherd often experienced the dream that wakes himself up in the early morning about the journey to the tri-pyramids in the Egyptian desert. Initially, the boy ignored it as just a dream. After a while, in the field with his lamb he encountered his day-today life as a lamb. He was ashamed of himself as a human who was living the life of a lamb that has no motto, targets and ideas about the future. With this revealed intention, he prepared himself to step into the adventurous life that pushed him to claim his life as a human. After all he is ready to believe the unknown future and the signs. With the guidance of the Melchizedek, king of Salem whom he met in the market of Tarifa and the old gypsy woman, a fortuneteller who interpreted the dream of the treasure that the shepherd boy dreamt was in the Egyptian desert, he decided to step towards the treasure.

Santiago

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Here, the author characterises Santiago with, “You will never be able to escape from your heart. So it’s better to listen to what it has to say. That way, you will never have to fear an unanticipated blow”. (Coelho 124)

Thus the character converted himself to take the risk which assured him that he was living. Santiago crossed the desert by selling all his lambs. He has only the trust on his dream, words of the people whom he met during his travel and some signs. In the very end of the story, the boy with his dreams after a long journey toward the words of his heart, Santiago found nothing under the pyramids and instantly asked to move to where he dreamt about the treasure. During his journey earlier in the desert towards the words of his heart, he felt like returning to his life as a shepherd. He thought that it was very hard for the shepherd boy to be an adventurer. Even after losing all his lambs and money, he had not turned back from following the omens, the words of the heart. Here, Coelho reveals that the whole universe including us is made by the same hand. So, Soul of the Universe is the same as our Soul. It clears our minds, so that we can communicate with everything in the universe which also can communicate with us. On behalf of existence, the whole universe conspires with us every moment. Coelho insists, “When you want something all the universe conspires in helping you achieve it”. (Coelho 21)

Finally, he had found the treasure where his heart had directed him. Through this character, Coelho claims that one can find the meaning of one’s own life by following the words of one’s soul and listening to the soul of the world.

Souls are All Same

As per Coelho’s perception, Souls are all same in their nature. “Omens are the form of a language that helps us to listen to the world” (Arias 6). Omen can be different from one another, but the soul resembles others and is seen as the same thing that communicates with us.

In order to find the treasure, you will have to follow the omens. God has prepared a path for everyone to follow. You just have to read the omens that he left for you. (Coelho 30)

Santiago and Coelho

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Are All the Souls the Same? A Spiritualistic Study on Paulo Coelho’s *The Alchemist*

278

Like Santiago, Coelho found the writer in himself by risking experiences in the pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela which was initiated by his own soul. Coelho has filled in the role of the writer by following the soul towards his own preoccupation. Discovering the destiny of an individual succeeds as a result of a deep observation of his/her routine life. But those people who accept their routines and forgot to observe, could not target their destiny. It is possible only by risk taking, challenging the problems and also being ready to lose such things in their routines. As the author said, existentialism never gives us any hint of our roles in our lives. So better listen to the soul and find the right role for us in the world.

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