



**A Search for a Way of Life: Reflection of Paulo Coelho's Philosophic Vision in His
Novel 'The Alchemist'**

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Paulo Coelho, a Brazilian novelist is one of the most famous American Authors. He received many international awards like, the Crystal Award by the World Economic Forum. His fictional expertise has been enchanting readers around the world. 'The Alchemist' and 'The Archer' are here chosen as the object of the study of Coelho's philosophical vision within symbols. He focuses how to live life and how to actualize something that becomes our passion. A philosophical value has strong relationship with life. It opens new horizon that is very beneficial for humans in order to live their lives better.

'The Alchemist' is considered as his master piece. This novel has spellbinding power and is considered as it fulfills the quest of self attainment and has various theological and spiritual implications. It is a story of Santiago, a shepherd treasures which he visualized. He came across a wide variety of people and places and faces different obstacles. It was undoubtedly an adventurous journey required strong efforts to make his dream true. He explores the significance of love and discovered the true meaning of life. His journey enriches the meaning of existence as it brings a message of hope. This novel delineates that when there are struggles and fights in the life against ego, life is considered successful but in this process wisdom required which is life's greatest achievement. Life is a continuous process revolving around innumerable deeds and one encounters various ups and down, facing success and defeats. One should participate full heartedly in all the activities in the way of life. Life does not have any fixed purpose. One should face all the activities as a game of entertainment. In 'The Alchemist', The Alchemist likes Santiago.

"Before the dream is realized the soul of the world tests everything that was learnt along the way. It does not, because it is evil, but so that we can in addition to realizing our

dreams, master the lessons we have learned as we've moved towards that dream. That's the point at which most people give up. It is the point at which as we say in the language of the desert one dies of thirst just when the palm trees have appeared on the horizon. ...”

Through his life experiences Coelho had internally come to terms with the fact that everyone must live out his or her madness. A little madness is quiet good for a sound mental health. He asserts that many people enjoy their madness to evade their responsibilities and obligations and this he concludes from his own experience. Coelho criticizes this attitude and believes that human being is a unique creature, each with his own individual capacity and own instincts, forms of pleasures and desire for adventure. However society always tries to impose a collective way of behaving. Human being, since the ages, is trying to question why one must follow a specific conventional behavioral pattern when we rejects to behave according to that pattern, when one goes against conventional rules, society frowns on us. But Coelho celebrates the unconventional behavioral patterns. He asserts that one must dare to pursue one's dream courageously like Santiago. In a post modernistic vein he believes that to satisfy our innate curiosity is our prime duty. One should not suppress oneself under social fear of good and bad. One should not compromise one's ways of living.

Santiago's journey in 'The Alchemist' explained the quest for fulfillment of destiny which reflects the magic and wisdom. His story teaches about the essential wisdom of listening to our hearts. Though, initially he was also frightened, the idea of selling his sheep was scary for him but his deep concern was something else. He was interested in searching something new. Coelho say's that dreams are the language of God and through 'The Alchemist' paves the way to the fact that to realize one's destiny is a personal real obligation.

As Santiago firmly decided to find the hidden treasure, everyone should try to actualize their dreams. Coelho firmly believes that when one determined and pursues his dream, nature supports, as the alchemist says, “When a person desires something, all the universe conspires to help that to realize his dream.”

The wise person understood that this world is only an image and a copy of ideal world. Coelho in his works focuses that “Always keep listening to your heart, what it tells you, it

will always be there inside you, repeating to you what you are thinking about life and the world. You will never be able to escape from your heart. So it's better to listen to what it has to say.

People feel themselves incapable to realize their dreams, they are afraid to pursue their most important dreams, they think they are unable to achieve them. But Paulo Coelho believes that, "The fear of suffering worse than suffering itself."

'The Archer' also plays a very significant role in the search for a way of life. As a non-conformist, Paulo stresses on the fact that one should try to search the true meaning of one's existence and for this one should try to be honest for his or her dreams. He says that for a whole life's journey accurate shot is very important, made with peace in your soul. We should never judge people without first learning to hear and respect them. To achieve precision, one must practice the difficult things daily and tries to discover a knowledge he already has in his soul.

In 'The Archer' Coelho gives a precise description of best allies. He explains that best allies are those who do not think like anyone else, people who are interesting in what you are doing. The people who can't bear to set around waiting for things to happen in order to decide which attitude to adopt, aware that this could prove highly dangerous. We should trust our intuitions and pay no attention to prejudiced behavior of the people which is a resultant of their own limitations and inner fear. Coelho's works inspire us to experiment, take risks, fall, get hurt and then take more risks. If you never take a risk you will never know what changes you need to make.

Coelho teaches us that we should not hesitate to change direction in order to realize our true goal and always join with those who do their work with enthusiasm. A 'bow' is symbolically used to convey that like a bow, we should have flexible approach. If we stretch it beyond its capacity, will break it or exhaust the hand holding it.

So we should try to be in harmony. He says that the bow is life source of energy and the arrow is intention. The intention must be clear, straight and balanced one the arrow has gone, it will never come back, so act carefully. You are the one who choose the target and you are responsible for it. Coelho asserts that target exists only if the archer exists i.e.

existence precedes essence, so hit only that target which is the true desire of an archer. ‘The Archer’ inspires the reader to take risks, embrace the unexpected. There is a framework for a rewarding life, “hard work, passion, purpose, the willingness to fail and urge to make a difference.”

The experiences of Santiago reveal that life is significant of those who pursue their dream, their destiny. It gives the inspiration to follow our dreams by seeing the world through our own eyes.

Santiago may bring not only him but others who read this excellent book closer to recognizing their inner destinies. Tetsuya’s story suggests that living without a connection between action and soul cannot fulfill. A life that is suppressed by fear of rejection or failure is not a life worth living. One must take risks, and embrace the unexpected journey that fate has offered courageously.

References –

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