

Following Your Personal Legend: Santiago's Spiritual Journey in *The Alchemist*.
A Structured Approach to Spiritual Journeys and a Case Study of Paulo Coelho's *The
Alchemist*

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1. Abstract

In this thesis I provide an innovative and structured definition of the spiritual journey and apply this definition to my analysis of Santiago's spiritual journey in *The Alchemist*. Since it has proven difficult to attain a final definition of the spiritual journey, in this thesis I have developed a structural definition in which six important subpoints are identified. These subpoints are the personal legend, revelation, community, darkness, the existence of God and sacraments. All these subpoints originate from the works of Paulo Coelho, Hans van Stralen and John Neary and are brought together in a structural definition. These subpoints are then used as instruments in my analysis of Santiago's journey in three main points of *The Alchemist*: the beginning of Santiago's journey, his meeting with Melchizedek and finally his trip through the desert. Together these three points demonstrate the most significant segments of his spiritual journey. This thesis creates the possibility for deeper analysis into the links that exist between the works of Paulo Coelho and spirituality as well as analysis of the spiritual journey in general.

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3. Introduction

The Alchemist tells the story of the shepherd Santiago, who decides to leave his flock behind in order to find his true destiny. He does this inspired by a dream he has in which he sees that there is treasure buried at the foot of the Egyptian pyramids. On his journey he encounters several important figures, such as a gypsy, Melchizedek, King of Salem, the girl of his dreams Fatima and eventually the alchemist himself. All of these people help him to find the treasure that he has dreamed of, and that will help him fulfil his own personal legend. The story eventually comes to a full circle when Santiago finds out that the treasure he has been searching for is buried on the grounds of the church where he first had his dream. On his return he finds a chest full of gold coins and jewelry. But more than that he realizes what is really important for him in his life. He makes the decision to take the treasure to Fatima and spend his life with her (Coelho).

The story of Santiago contains multiple elements of spirituality and shows how people always have the ability to follow their dreams. Because of this, it has been highly praised by the readers of Coelho and gained interest among scholars. In this thesis, I will further explore the spirituality present in the novel through the spiritual journey of Santiago. In order to accomplish this, I will establish an innovative and structured definition of the spiritual journey.

The Alchemist has generated great interest and received overall high praise which can be seen on Goodreads, “the world’s largest site for readers and book recommendations” (Goodreads). This site gives readers a platform to rate and write reviews for all the books they have read. When looking at reviews that people have written about this novel it becomes clear it has had a positive impact on many readers. Out of the 2,086,605 given ratings, more than half of them (67%) are four or five stars, which makes a total of 1,403,704 people. When looking more closely at reasons why readers liked this book, people valued the book most for

the way in which it helped them realize their own true potential. Lamski Kikita says that “reading this book always sets me on the right path towards achieving dreams I have put on hold.” Renee Amberg explains how this book reminds her “of a tale a mother would tell her children to pass down to generations to help spread the power of the Universe, spirituality, and the soul”.

Besides reviews in popular media, the novel has also been noticed by academics. People have observed the message that Coelho is trying to convey with his novel (Soni 85) and the elements of magic realism that can be found (Smila 38). Another interesting paper is written by Micheal Kremenik, who looks at the hero’s journey that can be found in *The Alchemist*. He explains how the journey of Santiago reflects that of the hero’s journey (123). The most important part of this hero’s journey is the fact that “the force one is looking for in the hero’s journey is within oneself” (129) which is exactly what Kremenik found Coelho also shows in *The Alchemist*. One element that seems to be overlooked in the research into Coelho’s novel, is the spiritual journey of the main character. Although Kremenik does touch upon this subject lightly, I think that the hero’s journey does not encompass all of the important elements of Santiago’s journey. That is why in this thesis I show how Santiago’s journey can be interpreted as a spiritual journey.

By interpreting *The Alchemist* in this way, I give a more complete picture of the story that has had a positive impact on the lives of so many people, and I begin establishing links between spirituality and Coelho’s novels. In addition, I offer an innovative and structured definition of the spiritual journey, to be used in research going forward. To accomplish this, I structured this thesis in the following way: in section 4, I look at spirituality and the spiritual journey, as well as give a definition for the spiritual journey. In section 5, I build on this definition and elaborate on the six important subpoints of the spiritual journey: the personal legend, the revelation, community, darkness, the existence of God and sacraments. Finally, in

section 6, I interpret three moments in *The Alchemist* in light of the spiritual journey and show how the combination of these three moments establishes Santiago's spiritual journey.

4. Spirituality and the spiritual journey

When talking about spirituality, and more specifically the spiritual journey it is important to understand exactly what defines this. Often when talking about spirituality people understand it as being either completely entwined with religion or something that is standing apart from religion completely and is a different approach to the sacred. But as Rina Arya has shown, the lines between religion and spirituality have become more and more blurry since the beginning of the twentieth century, which can primarily be attributed to the increased use of media and technology (83). This has led to a "greater range of spiritual expressions that is seen not only in the printed image but also in film and technologies" (84). People no longer feel the need to strictly adhere to just one religion, but approach religion and spirituality as a "pick and mix" (84) in which they choose and test aspects of religions or other spiritual practices and use them to benefit themselves as they see fit. Due to this it becomes difficult to give spirituality a simple definition. What is most important to keep in mind is that spirituality is something that complements the lives of people. It gives people a purpose and helps them find a community of people who share the same views. This makes it an important part of someone's life and makes it able to influence different aspects of life including relationships and self-fulfilment.

Spirituality is interpreted in many different ways, therefore, defining the spiritual journey has proven difficult. In the next paragraphs I focus on the six most important subpoints of this journey. Before I do this it is important to have a working definition of the spiritual journey. Previous research that has been conducted into spiritual journeys, such as John Neary's analysis of spiritual journeys in "Young Goodman Brown" and *Eyes Wide Shut*, lacks a clear definition of the spiritual journey. Although important aspects were given it

lacked a final definition which often seems to be the case when discussing the topic of spiritual journeys. For this reason, within this thesis I developed a structured and universal definition of the spiritual journey: ‘a spiritual journey is a journey that someone undertakes in order to give their life a purpose and find their personal legend. The journey begins with someone having a revelation, then they encounter sacraments, darkness and a God in some form. At some point during the journey the person will have to leave their community behind in order to connect with a new community that fits their new lifestyle and beliefs.’

5. Theoretical Framework

In this thesis I interpret the spiritual journey of Santiago in *The Alchemist*. For this I will first explain six important points of the spiritual journey, after which I will systematically relate these to the novel. The six subpoints used are the personal legend, the revelation, community, darkness, the existence of God and the sacraments. All of these subpoints can be found in different parts of *The Alchemist*. To explain these, I use John Neary’s article ‘Shadows and Illuminations: Spiritual Journeys to the Dark Side in “Young Goodman Brown” and “Eyes Wide Shut”’, Hans van Stralen’s first chapter of his dissertation *Gehoor geven – een discursieve benadering van de religieuze bekering* and an interview with Paulo Coelho. All these articles contribute to the analysis of spiritual journeys.

An important aspect of Van Stralen’s research is that he focusses on the religious conversion in works of non-fiction in his chapter. But the theories he describes can just as well be applied to elements of fiction writing, such as *The Alchemist*. Van Stralen explains religious conversion as “een verhaal [...] dat mensen telkens opnieuw aan zichzelf en anderen vertellen” (12). This storytelling is clearly seen in *The Alchemist*, as the novel consists of the story of Santiago’s conversion or spiritual journey. The spiritual journey can be compared to a

conversion story because as explained previously spirituality and religion are becoming further intertwined and are not often seen as separate entities anymore.

5.1 Personal Legend

The first important point in a spiritual journey is the personal legend. The concept of the personal legend has been introduced by Paulo Coelho and he stressed the importance of this in *The Alchemist* on multiple occasions. According to Coelho, the personal legend is the reason why people are here on this earth. It is the reason of life, and when you are on the right path you will notice this because you feel enthusiasm in everything that you do. This still does not give a very clear explanation of what the personal legend is. But because of the fact that the personal legend is different for everybody, it is difficult to give it a concrete definition. What the personal legend is can be referred to as: the purpose of someone's life. It is a goal that someone has to complete or a destination that someone has to reach. When someone is on the right path towards this, they can tell. This is because they feel more inspired and enthusiastic in contrast to how they feel when they just participate in the expectations of society. Of course, not everyone fulfils their personal legend in life, and the older someone gets the harder it is to get in touch with your personal legend ("Oprah and Paulo Coelho")

5.2 Revelation

Besides the personal legend, revelation is also an important element of the spiritual journey and *The Alchemist*. The revelation is an important part of the theological approach to conversion as described by Van Stralen. He explains that in the theological approach "de openbaring de belangrijkste kennisbron is om tot inzicht te komen [...]. De bekering betreft binnen deze optie een deelname aan goddelijke kennis of liefde, die niet via natuurlijke wegen tot stand kan komen" (20). This means that in order to gain insight into oneself, and take part

in the conversion, one needs to experience some form of revelation which can only be found in something that goes beyond our natural understanding of how things work. Furthermore, it suggests that in this approach reason has no part in the conversion. The archetypical form of journey that follows from this revelation is the pilgrimage, which is often embodied in a desert trip (31). This is because for the pilgrimage it is important for the subject to remove himself from his surroundings and his social groups.

5.3 Community

The removal from one's normal surroundings and social groups is also important for the next subpoint of the spiritual journey, the community. This is part of the theological approach to conversion, but it plays a more vital role in the sociological approach. This approach focusses mainly on communities and the social groups of the person who is to be converted. When talking about communities, one of the theories that Van Stralen mentions is the "strain theory" (38). This theory lends itself well for analyzing the spiritual journey of Santiago. The strain theory refers to the stressors, or strains, that a person feels in their current environment and that they seek to escape. The theory thus focuses on how a person decides to leave their current community because of a feeling of frustration that derives from this community. They feel somewhat deprived or unsatisfied with their current community and feel like they lack something, which they seek to find in a different group. This is then where a conversion takes place. Besides this, there are two overlapping points in all theories surrounding communities and conversion. First of all, there is always a strong focus on some sort of personal absence that inspires a person to look for something more, which he opts to find in a different group. Secondly, conversion always involves two communities and happens when someone moves from a certain community to another (43).

5.4 Darkness

Besides the personal legend, a revelation and community, the topic of darkness is also an important element in the spiritual journey. The role of darkness in the spiritual journey has previously been explored by Neary. He used theological and philosophical theories to show how spiritual journeys will always have some dark element. This starts with explaining the spiritual journey as a “journey to depth” (248). With this he explains how it is necessary to encounter darkness in order to find spirituality. This darkness can entail multiple things, but Neary stresses how “people first have to be broken in some way: “when an earthquake shakes and disrupts the surface of our self-knowledge – [then] we are willing to look into a deeper level of our being” (249). This means that in order for a journey to become spiritual, there has to be an event that throws disorder or confusion in someone’s life. This event then makes it possible for someone to become more invested with the spiritual realm of themselves and the world. For Neary, this means that the spiritual journey ultimately also becomes a journey in which the subject turns to darkness, and that therefore the story will always deal with some form of obscurity. But this does not always have to be the case. Just because there are disrupting moments in someone’s life, does not mean that they cannot eventually embark on an enlightening journey.

5.5 Existence of God

Besides darkness, Neary also speaks of the presence of some form of God in the spiritual journey. He shows how in explanations of spirituality there is almost always the need for a form of God. In some of these explanations God is the final destination of a person’s spiritual journey. But God’s presence can also be seen throughout spiritual journeys. God in this context does not only point to the Christian God, but to a bigger, all-encompassing concept, that at the same time is more vague, unfathomable and incomprehensible. It is not something

that we will ever get a complete picture of, but finding this God, in whichever way, is essential to qualify something as a spiritual journey. God is seen as a mystery, someone who rules the world and humanity from above. Because of the mystery that surrounds Him, it is more difficult to talk about God. Instead, people talk about Him in metaphors, such as the Father, Creator et cetera.

5.6 Sacraments

The last subpoint of the spiritual journey is the sacraments. Again introduced by Neary, these sacraments can be seen as embodiments of the spiritual, or as he explains it himself: “By *sacrament* I mean any person, place, thing, or event, any sight, sound, taste, touch, or smell, that causes us to notice the love which supports all that exists, that undergirds your being and mine and the being of everything about us” (252). An encounter with one of those sacraments is an encounter where someone comes into contact with something that makes them aware of the spiritual realm.

All of these six subpoints are of importance for the spiritual journey, and together form a complete framework for analyzing such a journey. There are, of course, multiple other theories on spirituality and theorists that work on this subject, but the above mentioned give a broad overview of the multiple ways that spirituality can be discussed in literature and have been central in forming the definition of spiritual journeys used in this thesis. All of these subpoints are of relevance for the discussion of Santiago’s spiritual journey in *The Alchemist*, because together they show the complete spiritual journey that Santiago goes through.

Therefore, I will now proceed with discussing *The Alchemist*.

6. The spiritual journey of Santiago in *The Alchemist*

I now discuss how Santiago's journey can be interpreted as a spiritual journey by analyzing three parts of *The Alchemist*. I begin with discussing the beginning of Santiago's spiritual journey, starting at the moment he leaves his house until he decides to go to Africa. The next important part is the meeting with Melchizedek and the impact that this meeting has on Santiago. Lastly, I want to discuss the ending of Santiago's spiritual journey in the novel, which consists of the last part of his desert trip and him finding the treasure. These three parts of the story are able to show the most important features of Santiago's spiritual journey. During this discussion I refer to the six subpoints of a spiritual journey that have been discussed in the previous section: the personal legend, revelation, communities, darkness, God and the sacraments.

6.1 The beginning

There would not be a spiritual journey without a beginning, so it is only fitting to begin interpreting Santiago's spiritual journey at the start. Santiago's spiritual journey begins when he decides to leave his house and family in order to become a shepherd. His parents always wanted him to become a priest and gave him all the education necessary, but this was not what Santiago desired. He tells his father how he wishes to see the world, and his father tells him the only people who are able to do this are shepherds. Thus, Santiago decides to become a shepherd in order to fulfil his dream of seeing the world and his father gives him the money they had saved for his ordination to start his flock (30). Since being able to travel has been a life-long dream of Santiago, this can be seen as the start of Santiago following his own personal legend. As mentioned before, Coelho explains how finding your personal legend is one of the most important parts of the spiritual journey, and of life itself. By deciding to travel Santiago gives his life purpose and starts following his personal legend. This is the start of his

spiritual journey. Santiago also shows enthusiasm for his plans, which is a sign that he is on the right path.

Another important part of the decision to leave home is that Santiago breaks ties with his family and community. From the novel it becomes apparent that communication over a long distance is not a possibility. An example of this is how Santiago only finds out whether or not someone would like to buy wool by travelling through villages, which shows that there are no other means of communication. He is also never seen to have contact with his parents and is completely separated from them. Looking at this from the perspective of a spiritual journey shows how important this is, because in order for someone to be able to connect with a new community or form of spirituality, they have to leave their old community behind. This is something that has already been discussed by Van Stralen in his discussion of sociological and theological approaches to conversion. It is clear that by staying with his family, Santiago would not be able to fulfil his personal legend, so leaving his family behind means that he opens up to new experiences of spirituality. These new experiences of spirituality eventually lead him to his treasure and make him fulfil his personal legend.

His first new experience of spirituality starts when he first dreams about the pyramids in Egypt, and eventually decides to make this dream a reality. This dream occurs when on his travels he sleeps in an old abandoned church with an enormous fig tree outside. In the dream Santiago is walking through a meadow with his sheep when a child comes and plays with his sheep. Then suddenly the child reaches for Santiago's hand and takes him to the pyramids in Egypt. The child tells him "als je hierheen komt, zul je een verborgen schat vinden" (36). At that moment when the child is about to point in the right direction, Santiago wakes up. At first the dream does not seem to have any meaning for him, but after having the exact same dream multiple times Santiago starts to wonder if it has deeper meaning to it. He decides to have his dream interpreted by a gypsy (34). Although he does not immediately decide to pack up his

stuff and go to Egypt, eventually he does start this journey. The dream that Santiago has can be interpreted as his revelation. This revelation is specifically important in the theological approach of conversion and involves a meeting with something supernatural. There is no place for reason in this revelation. Santiago's dream can be seen as something supernatural, since it seems to be given to him in order to fulfil his personal legend.

After this revelation a pilgrimage usually follows, which is seen as the archetype of the conversion journey. This is often embodied in a desert trip. Santiago's further travels in order to find the treasure are also a pilgrimage, and end with a desert trip. This thus means that it can be seen as part of conversion or his spiritual journey.

6.2 Meeting Melchizedek

Santiago's journey continues, and eventually he is visited by Melchizedek. At first Santiago does not know who he is and simply sees him as an old man who is keeping him from reading his book. But the old man gets Santiago's attention when he starts talking about people choosing their own destinies which makes Santiago believe he is able to read his mind. The old man introduces himself as Melchizedek, king of Salem, and tells Santiago that he can teach him how to reach his treasure. Melchizedek is able to give Santiago his family tree and other details of his life which he had never told anyone. That is when Santiago really believes that the man is able to help him. Melchizedek tells Santiago that he will come to see him the next day so he can help him fulfil his personal legend. He senses that Santiago is about to divert from this path. Santiago promises to give him a tenth of his flock in exchange for information about his treasure. He sells the rest of his sheep to a friend and is then free to start his journey to find the treasure. Melchizedek tells him that in order to find this treasure he has to follow the signs that he is given along the way. To help him with this, Melchizedek gives him two stones, Urim and Tummin. These can help when there is a question that requires

either a yes or a no for an answer. Eventually the two part ways, and Santiago travels towards Egypt (40-63).

The meeting with Melchizedek is very important for the spiritual journey of Santiago for multiple reasons. First of all, it is important because it is the final impulse that makes Santiago decide to go to Egypt. Before this meeting, Santiago was actually discouraged from the gypsy. He felt like she was just a charlatan who was trying to get his money. But Melchizedek made him see that his dream was actually meaningful and that by searching for the treasure he is fulfilling his personal destiny.

Besides this, Melchizedek and the stones that he gives Santiago keep their importance throughout the entire novel and can be seen as the sacraments of Santiago's spiritual journey. Sacraments are embodiments of the spiritual and make someone aware of the journey that they are on. They can be found in "any person, place, thing, or event, any sight, sound, taste, touch, or smell" (Neary 252). This means that Melchizedek and Urim and Tummin function as these sacraments for Santiago, because they represent these things or persons in the novel that makes someone aware of the spiritual. Both Melchizedek and Urim and Tummin fulfil the role of sacraments in several parts of the novel. This happens at points where Santiago meets a person but sees in them the face of Melchizedek. Examples of this are the crystal merchandiser and the baker that he met on his first day in Tanger (103). Both of these occasions this makes Santiago think back to the meeting he had with the old man, and it reminds him of his goal while also giving him the strength to keep going. Urim and Tummin have a different role in Santiago's journey since they are present with him at all times. The only time he actually uses them is on the market when he first arrives in Tanger (75) but during the rest of the story they still keep their significance. Like Melchizedek's face, every time he feels them in his bag or sees them, he is reminded of his goal.

6.3 The desert trip

The last part of Santiago's journey begins when he starts his trip through the desert. This part of his journey can be seen as his pilgrimage, in the form of a desert trip and is strongly related to the revelation that he had in his dream, and the theological approach to conversion where all these things are of importance. The trip through the desert takes up a large part of the story and consists of many spiritual elements. The main subpoints of the spiritual journey that can be found here are darkness, the existence of God and, again, community.

The desert trip can be divided into two main parts, before and after meeting the alchemist. Before meeting the alchemist, Santiago does not have a strong sense of where he is going and is mainly going along with the caravan. He still knows he has to go to the pyramids of Egypt, but he has no idea how long it will take to get there since he has no control over the speed with which he travels. And it is too dangerous to travel through the desert alone. On this part of his trip he does not encounter anything spiritual, but this can be contributed to the fact that he does not have control over where he is going and has no need to look for any signs.

This all changes when he meets the alchemist, and gains control of his travels again. The alchemist helps Santiago understand where he needs to go and helps him interpret the signs they encounter on their way. Santiago meets the alchemist at the oasis where the caravan has to stop because traveling through the desert has become too dangerous with the tribal war that is going on. The alchemist recognizes Santiago as his destined apprentice and takes him under his wing. They decide to go on with the trip through the desert together, despite the war that is going on. This puts them in some dangerous situations, where they encounter several tribal warriors. At this point the tribe warriors refuse to let them continue their journey. The alchemist negotiates a deal where they are free to continue their travels after Santiago changes into the wind. This scares Santiago, because he has no idea that he is

able to do this, but the alchemist has faith. After three days of practice Santiago has to show the general how he changes himself into the wind and he succeeds. During this change he comes into contact with the sand in the desert, the wind, the sun and eventually God. This is a spiritual moment, because here Santiago learns about the existence of God: “en de jongen dook in de ziel van de wereld, en zag dat de ziel van de wereld een deel was van de ziel van God, en dat de ziel van God zijn eigen ziel was. En dat hij dus wonderen kon doen” (225). Not only does Santiago learn about the existence of God, but he learns how God is all encompassing and is even present in himself. The importance of the presence of a God in a spiritual journey has already been discussed as well as how this does not need to relate to the Christian God, but to a more all-encompassing version of Him. The presence of God in Santiago’s journey is therefore also important for his spiritual journey.

Another important part of Santiago’s meeting with the alchemist is the fact that the alchemist is a person who Santiago can relate to and who teaches him more about his newfound spirituality and the journey that he is on. He is therefore part of Santiago’s new community. He treats Santiago as an equal and in their relationship Santiago finds safety and answers to his questions about spirituality. The alchemist is not the only person in his new community, because at the end of the novel it is revealed that Santiago eventually returns to the oasis to live with Fatima and all the other members of this community. By returning, Santiago thus finds a new community after leaving his parents and hometown behind. This brings Santiago’s spiritual journey with regards to community full circle. It also corresponds with the strain theory as it shows how there were strains in his former existence which he wanted to leave behind. He only interacted with his new community after doing so both of which are important parts of strain theory.

The trip through the desert is also the part of Santiago’s journey where he struggles the most. He encounters substantial threats and comes face to face with multiple of his fears,

including the threat of war (122), getting captured and almost killed by enemies (199; 203; 206) and leaving the love of his life behind (186). Although all these things combined already show great struggles, the hardest part of his desert trip is when he finally reaches the pyramids and is digging for his treasure. Here he gets robbed by two refugees who take the last of his gold with them and beat him until he is almost dead. Eventually though one of these refugees tells him about his own dreams about a treasure which makes Santiago realize that the treasure is actually buried at the church with the fig tree outside. The place where he first had his dream of the pyramids of Egypt and the treasure (235-240).

These events show how Santiago's journey is a "journey to depth" as Neary has described it. In this journey to depth there has to be an encounter with darkness, this is an event that throws disorder and confusion into someone's life. At the point where Santiago has finally reached what he believes is his final destination he is faced with confusion and disorder instead of happiness. First the treasure is not where he thought it would be which leaves him devastated. Immediately afterwards, he is almost left for dead without any money to get home. This leads to disappointment and despair, and these events can therefore be seen as the encounter with darkness in Santiago's journey. This desperate state allows him to look deeper into the meaning of things, especially the refugee's words about the dream he had about a treasure. Eventually he can figure out that his treasure is actually buried on the grounds of the church where he first had his dream about the pyramids of Egypt. By returning to this church and finding the treasure Santiago fulfils his personal legend. Which then allows him to return to the oasis to spend the rest of his life with Fatima. This is therefore also the end of Santiago's spiritual journey in the novel.

7. Conclusion

In this thesis I offered an innovative and structural definition of the spiritual journey and I applied this definition to the analysis of Santiago's spiritual journey in *The Alchemist*. Since recent research of the spiritual journey has not given a final definition of the spiritual journey I provided a structural definition where the spiritual journey is undertaken in search of the personal legend. During this journey there are besides the personal legend five more important subpoints: revelation, community, darkness, the existence of God and sacraments. There are three moments in *The Alchemist* that are most important when looking at the spiritual journey of Santiago. These are the start of Santiago's journey, the meeting with Melchizedek and lastly the trip through the desert. Analyzing the start of Santiago's journey shows how leaving his home means leaving his family and community in order to fulfil his personal legend. Following this legend is further encouraged by the revelation that he has in his dream. He realizes his dream is telling him to go to the pyramids of Egypt. After meeting Melchizedek, he is further encouraged to continue his travels and Melchizedek turns into a sacrament for Santiago, together with the stones he receives from him: Urim and Tummin.

The desert trip makes up the largest part of Santiago's journey and thanks to his meeting with the alchemist in this part, Santiago becomes aware of the presence of God in himself and the world around him. In addition to this he also finds his new community in the oasis with Fatima and the alchemist, as well as the rest of the people in the village. This does not mean that his journey is only positive from here on out because he does have to face confusion and disorder before finally discovering his treasure.

Looking at the analysis as a whole, it can be concluded that Santiago does indeed go through a spiritual journey according to the definition of a spiritual journey. By analyzing this I established links between *The Alchemist* and spirituality and these links could be further explored in different novels of Coelho. Besides this, this research can also be used for broader

research into the spiritual journey, especially those found in literature. This thesis thus attempts to be a start in far more elaborate research into spiritual journeys and the works of Paulo Coelho.

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