Chapter I: Introduction

Considered the most important literary phenomenon of 20th century, *The Alchemist* (1988) explores the theme of one's dream. The illusion the readers have that Coelho is talking directly to and about them is enhanced by the fact that he has often borrowed them from their lives for his fiction. Coelho is recognized for his powerful storytelling technique and profound spiritual insights he blends seamlessly into his parables.

Coelho tells people what they want to hear, or rather that he tells them what they wish for but never thought possible. It is a symbolic story that urges its readers to follow their dreams. With *The Alchemist*, Coelho states that we should not avoid our destinies, and urges people to follow their dreams, because to find our personal myth and our mission on the earth is the way to find "God," meaning happiness, fulfillment, and the ultimate purpose of creation. In his journey, Santiago, the protagonist of the novel, sees the greatness of the world, and meets all kinds of exciting people like kings and alchemists.

In *The Alchemist*, Coelho, like a village bard writes of normal and common people who put themselves in extraordinary situations to nurture their inner selves, using unpretentious, unadorned prose. Unlike other novels, *The Alchemist* urges readers to pursue their goals with great determination. By giving a moral message to the readers, *The Alchemist* imparts wisdom as found in children's fairytales. This thesis tries to find out how Coelho tends to give the perception of a fairytale in *The Alchemist* that seems to impart a positive lesson to its readers.

The Alchemist is an exciting novel that bursts with optimism. It is the kind of novel that tells us that everything is possible as long as we really want it to happen. The book seems to impart numerous jewels of wisdom to its readers. This simple

fable celebrates the richness of the human spirit. Readers are captured and absorbed into the tale. They find themselves relating to the fears that Santiago undergoes. As a result, the enchanting novel has inspired a devoted following around the world. Coelho tells people what they want to hear, or rather that he tells them what they wish for but never thought possible could even be probable.

1.1. Coelho and his Literary Odyssey

The novel is exotic, dazzling, timeless and entertaining. It breaks down the journey we all take to find the most meaningful treasures in our lives into the steps that are at once natural and magical. It is about the faith, power, and courage we all have within us to pursue the intricate path of a personal legend. Coelho confesses in an interview to Glauco Ortolano, how the idea of *The Alchemist* developed:

> You may be amazed to learn that the story of *The Alchemist* comes from the *Thousand and One Nights*. It is quite a short tale, only a few lines long, about a hidden treasure for which the hero searches far from home, only to find it eventually within himself. I took four guiding ideas from it: the personal legend, the language of signs, the soul of the world and the need to listen to one's heart. I started the novel with this very short tale as my guide. The only thing I knew was that the boy would eventually return to his starting point. (22)

Coelho's fascination with the spiritual quest dates back to his hippie days, when he traveled the world learning about secret societies, oriental religions, etc. His own life has in many ways been as varied and unusual as the protagonists of his internationally acclaimed novels. Like them, Coelho has followed a dream in a quest for fulfillment. His own dream, to be a writer, met with frustration throughout much of his early adult life, a time in which he worked at various professions, some of them

materially rewarding but spiritually unfulfilling. In 1970, after deciding that the law school was not for him, he traveled through much of South America, North Africa, Mexico, and Europe. Returning to Brazil after two years, he began a successful career as popular songwriter. In 1974, he was imprisoned for a short time by the military dictatorship then ruling in Brazil.

In 1988, Coelho published *The Alchemist*, which is based on Jorge Luis Borges Tale *of Two Dreamers*, which in turn was based on a tale from *The Book of One Thousand and One Nights*. Slow initial sales convinced his first publisher to drop the novel, but it went on to become one of the best-selling Brazilian books of all time. Melanie Cole says that to label Paulo Coelho a new-age author is to do him a disservice. She says that Coelho maintains an unusually 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. Lately the Brazilian writer has embarked on a pilgrimage to discuss his books about an Andalusian shepherd boy's journey across North Africa. (33)

His own dream, to be a writer, met with frustration throughout much of his early adult life, a time in which he worked at various professions, some of them materially rewarding but spiritually unfulfilling. In *The Alchemist*, Coelho shows how easy it is to give up ever attaining one's dreams due to complacency or not wanting to move out of one's comfort zone. The message of the novel directs us to follow one's dreams, listen to one's heart, trust, love and learn to let go of fear. Therefore, he seems to instruct his readers to listen to their heart just like his protagonist Santiago.

Many people have compared *The Alchemist* to Saint-Exupéry's *The Little Prince,* a children's book about another boy. Here, the Prince leaves his home in search of greater things, learning valuable lessons about life and love on the way. It is interesting to note that much of *The Little Prince* also takes place in the desert. There are many parallels to Santiago's journey in Herman Hesse's *Siddhartha.* They both develop a spiritual aspect being alone early in life. Later, just like Siddhartha on his journey, Santiago has to become a business man. His ideas succeed in making him wealthy, but he is apart from the business of his business. Complementing on Coelho's use of very simple themes in The *Alchemist,* Lynn Andriani writes:

> But rather than offering readers tantalizing tales of violence, thrills or sex, Coelho writes of regular people who put themselves in extraordinary situations to nurture their inner selves, using unpretentious, unadorned prose. Unlike those chart busters, Paulo Coelho's *The Alchemist* is a simple fable that urges readers to pursue their goals and not give up. By using a fable, he is trying to convey a message. (45)

The Alchemist parallels the boatman in *Siddhartha*, who, after transporting Siddhartha across the river, sends him on his way to follow his destiny, knowing he will return. The love story develops and ends differently. Santiago has a different personal legend in that aspect. Mac Margolis says that Paulo Coelho with his unkempt hair and a wispy beard, claims to commune with spirits. His fascination with the spiritual quest dates back to his hippie days, when he traveled the world learning about secret societies, oriental religions and mysticism. The style of writing is simplistic, with correlations to that of *The Little Prince*, fairy tales, or spiritual writings. About *The Alchemist*, he writes in the *Economist* that:

> Mr Coelho dresses up his readable tales with mysticism, epiphanies, conversations with angels, out-of-body experiences and the like. And that is what *The Alchemist* is all about: turning ordinary matter into riches. And Mr Coelho is an alchemist for our times. His writing resembles a sort of sketchbook therapy. *The Alchemist* is packed with proverbs, parables and advice that resemble entries in a New Age self-help manual: pursue your dreams, resist temptation, and banish negative thoughts. (61)

Santiago shows how along the way we learn to trust our hearts, read the seemingly inconspicuous signs, and understand that as we look to fulfill a dream, it looks to find us just the same, if we let it. There are some thoughts that pop in our mind as we read *The Alchemist.* We would have wondered how life would have been if we had chased our dreams. Like a fairytale, *The Alchemist* has a message for all of us. The message is that we must have the courage to follow our dreams and we should learn to comprehend the omens that cross our path.

1.2. Technique Used in *The Alchemist*

Fascinated by his discoveries, the reader explores the familiar and gets mired in sentimental, tranquilizing, self-centered, conformist, and spellbinding visions of the world that imprisons him. Coelho's plots tend to be allegorical, and his readers often say that they see their own lives in his books. His characters, though nominally diverse are somehow indeterminate, and their struggles are universalized. His writing is unadorned and pleasant to read. He writes in a non-literary style, with a message that confirms common sense. In spite of belonging to different genres, Coelho's narratives and self-help books have some fundamental effect. That is of anesthetizing

the alienated consciousness through the consoling reaffirmation of conventions and prevailing prejudices.

The Alchemist makes us reenter our childhood dreams that we had given up while growing up. The novel skillfully combines words of wisdom, philosophy, and simplicity of meaning and language, which makes it particularly readable. Coelho tends to mould *The Alchemist* like a fairytale that seems to impart a positive moral lesson to its readers. He has provocatively weaved together the structural pattern of the traditional fairytale to overcome depression and isolation of the modern world through dream-like and super natural elements. It is a novel that may appeal to everybody, because we can all identify with Santiago. In the majestic mountains of Andulusia, Santiago pursues his dream and finds hidden treasures. All of us have dreams, and are dying for somebody to tell us that they may come true.

One thing we all must remember is to follow our dreams. Everyone does not have the courage to do so. We might have to suffer in the plan of action just as Santiago does on many occasions. But we will not end up being disappointed. Things like the philosopher's stone, elixir of life and Urim and Thummim are thrown in at regular intervals giving the story a fairytale element. The mystic quality of Coelho's writing is clearly evident in this magical parable. Needless to say, the story concludes with a happy ending for the boy and for the reader. *The Alchemist* may sound like an oversimplified version of new-age philosophy and mysticism, but as Coelho states that simple things are the most valuable and only wise people tend to appreciate them.

In this vacuum, *The Alchemist* urges us into pursuing one's dreams and our personal legend. Sara Nelson is surprised at the global success of the inspirational novel and feels that every few decades a book is published that changes the lives of its

readers forever. She says that the subject of love inspires a beautiful lyricism in Coelho's writing:

> Apparently, Coelho's book helps people for which they seem everlastingly grateful. Paulo Coelho's parable *The Alchemist* is a little book about a boy, a burro and the meaning of life. Is its success major marketing or divine intervention? Actually, it's neither, or maybe a little bit of both. Even in depressed Ukrainian villages, people have read *The Alchemist and* turn out by the thousands to see him. Even in disparate places as Iran and Israel boasts a copy of his book. (56)

Coelho shows how easy it is to give up ever attaining one's dreams due to complacency. The personal legend is a being's reason to live. Everything in the world has a personal legend, and by reaching one's personal legend, they add to the Soul of the World, the purity of the world. Santiago's personal legend is obvious, to find his treasure at the Egyptian pyramids. Therefore Coelho feels that life does not need to be complicated and inspires us to listen to our heart and fulfill our personal legend. In today's fast paced life, ordinary working people do not have the leisure to halt and take a stock of the happenings around them. Things are changing so fast that man is not able to comprehend and to dream like when we were small and had numerous goals and ambitions.

1.3. Gist of *The Alchemist*

The Alchemist presents a simple fable, based on simple truths and places it in a highly unique situation. It is entertaining and brings a message which does not need to be complicated, except for those who are not ready to see the truth. By reading the magical story of Santiago who is seeking an adventure and dares to follow his dreams,

we tend to learn many lessons and acquire wisdom. The novel captivates and draws us into the storyline in a powerful manner.

In the novel, Santiago is a simple boy who lives by traveling with his sheep and is suddenly enchanted by a dream he dreamt while resting under a tree, inside a ruined church. He dreamt that if he travels to the pyramids, he will find his fortune. So he sets for an uncharted journey and along the way encounteres magical phenomenon, involving a King and then meeting the alchemist himself. He also meets the girl of his life, Fatima, in his way to Egypt. When he gets to the pyramids, he meets a desert soldier who tells him that two years ago, in the exact same spot where Santiago is, he dreams that in a tree that has grown inside the ruins of a church in Spain, he will find his treasure. In that instant, Santigo realizes that what he has been looking for all these years is right where he left it. Yet he does want to pursue his dream of finding his treasure and at times we see and feel his fear, but along his journey, he has learned to listen to his heart and to trust what his heart teaches him.

However, by the end of the novel, he discovers that treasure lies where one's heart belongs to, and that the treasure is the journey itself, the discoveries he makes, and the wisdom he acquires. Coelho's own life has in many ways been as varied and unusual as the protagonists of his internationally acclaimed novels. Like them, Coelho has followed a dream in a quest for fulfillment.

1.4. Criticism of *The Alchemist*

One of the most popular novels to emerge in the recent past, Coelho's *The Alchemist* is a story about the necessary pursuit of happiness. Though it was originally published in Portuguese in 1988, the novel's translation into English and republication in 1993 made the work easier for critics to take note of. Felicia Bonaparte says that language plays an important role in *The Alchemist* as here:

> The notion of a universal language spoken by all creation is an important one in *The Alchemist*. This language manifests itself in signs presented by nature. Coelho underscores his concept of an all-encompassing unity, tying language to the rest of nature. The world is itself a text, full of meanings to be deciphered and taught because everything on Earth is related. This is because everything, including inanimate objects, has a soul, and that soul is connected to the Soul of the World. (71)

The alchemist is urging simplicity. In Coelho's book, alchemy itself has become impossibly convoluted, when once upon a time the simplest of formulas could turn a common stone to gold. But along with that, John Halperin says that there is also the role of love as:

> Coelho posits a definition of love as inextricably linked to and perhaps subservient to a person's individual goals in life and one's realization of the self. What the alchemist suggests is that true love comes with the Personal Legend as well because true love will never stand in the way. Santiago must let go in order to receive real love, find fortune, and achieve understanding. (29)

Although the ultimate realization of one's dreams is a solitary affair, Santiago is required to accept help in various was because not all of which are immediately understood as helpful. He must agree to give up part of whatever fortune he finds. Therefore, Claudia Johnson adds that:

> *The Alchemist* can be understood as a roadmap to finding Santiago's treasure, both physical and spiritual. Like the four corners of the earth, there are four points of contention through which the protagonist must

> travel in order to find his treasure. He must face the reality of defeats, and deal with the reality of successes. He must place his faith in the alchemist when all logic would dictate otherwise. (162)

Like all of those who dare to dream, Santiago experiences setbacks. When he is able to raise enough money to travel, the reality of tribal warfare threatens his life. But like an adventurer in the midst of a sandstorm, Santiago keeps his eyes on the path and his mind on his task. When he eventually realizes his dreams, they are better than he could have ever imagined but according to D. G. Myers:

> The book is not at all about the specific goals that the protagonist pursues. It is about the importance of wanting something urgently and how the wanting seems to reorient the universe in harmony with that goal. It is also how genuine passion and enthusiasm are rewarded with success, how those who love us encourage us to pursue our goals, and how the act of reaching for goals plunges us into a strong current that carries us to places that we can never expect or know when we embark. (23)

Michael J. Stasio points out that by paying attention to the details in the world around him, which serve as omens guiding him towards his goal, young Santiago becomes an alchemist in his own right, spinning unfavorable circumstances into riches as:

> The message Coelho conveys, as well as his astounding settings, simple but meaningful writing style, and illustrious storyline enchants and transforms the hearts and minds of its readers. This is the message that The Alchemist portrays. Coelho shows us how even a wandering shepherd can do the impossible, after he has realized what he needs to,

> and encourages us to find our own dreams, realize our goals in life, and learn. (11)

The primary source of observation and analysis will be the text itself. For secondary sources, available critical reading and evaluation from authentic sources on the text and author will be thoroughly studied. This dissertation will take ideas developed in the field of fairytales as a supportive tool to prove the hypothesis.

The first chapter deals with an introductory aspect of the thesis. The second chapter delves into the theoretical modality that is to be effectively applied in the analysis of the novel. Therefore, it provides an introduction of the tool that is fairytales and its development. The third chapter of the thesis presents an analysis of *The Alchemist* at considerable length on the theoretical modality defined and developed in the second chapter. The fourth chapter concludes the research work. Standing on the firm foundation of the analysis of the text done extensively in the third chapter, it tries to prove my hypothesis stated in the thesis proposal.

Chapter II: Fairy Tales and Their Development

2.1. Fairy Tale: Definition and History

Originally, the stories we call fairy tales were merely a kind of tale, not marked out as a separate genre. The genre itself was differentiated by writers of the Renaissance, who began to define a genre of tales. The oral tradition of the fairy tale came long before the written page. Tales were told or enacted dramatically, rather than written down, and handed down from generation to generation. Because of this, the history of their development is necessarily obscure. The oldest known written fairy tales stem from ancient Egypt, (c. 1300 BC), and fairy tales appear, now and again, in written literature throughout literate cultures, as in *Cupid and Psyche* or the *Panchatantra* in India.

Later it became stabilized through the works of many writers, becoming an unquestioned genre in the works of Grimm Brothers. In this evolution, the name was coined when the "*précieuses*" took up writing literary stories. Madame d'Aulnoy invented the term "*contes de fée*," (Smith, 59) or fairy tale. The stylistic evidence indicates that these, and many later collections, reworked folk tales into literary forms. What they do show is that the fairy tale has ancient roots, older than the *Arabian Nights* collection of magical tales. Allusions to fairy tales appear plentifully in Geoffrey Chaucer's *The Canterbury Tales*, Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*, and the plays of William Shakespeare.

The folk imagination sees fairies as living in everyday surroundings such as hills, trees, streams, and sees fairy rings, fairy table and fairy seeds in natural objects. Marcia Lane in *A Way of Looking at Fairytales* writes, " fairytale is a literary story or folk that has a sense of the numinous feeling or sensation of supernatural or the mysterious, crucial story that happens in the past tense and a sorry that is not tied to

any specifics" (123). Generally, oral fairytales are about elusive creatures that folklorists study, record and try to trace through history. It is in oral form and an invigorating field of study. The *New Lexicon Webster's Dictionary of English Language* 1990 defines fairy tale as, "a story for children about fairies, or about magic and enchantment, very improbable and lie" (146).

The fairy tales not only entertain children but also inspire adults in the functioning of their adult life with glory, achievement, and success. A story that names a specific real person is a legend (even if it contains a magical occurrence). A story that happens in the future is a fantasy. Fairytales are sometimes spiritual, but never religious. Fairytales vary according to culture, language, religion, and different parts of the world, people and places. However, their sole purpose to the reader is didactic. It appears in all arts of the world and gives some moral vision to life. It entertains people and helps shape the thought of children and adults.

In cultures, where demons and witches are perceived as real, fairy tales may merge into legendary narratives. However, unlike legends and epics, they usually do not contain more than superficial references to religion and actual places, persons, and events. A fairy tale or fairy story is a fictional story that may feature folkloric characters (such as fairies, goblins, elves, trolls, witches, giants, and talking animals) and enchantments, often involving a far-fetched sequence of events. In modern-day parlance, the term is also used to describe something blessed with unusual happiness, as in fairy tale ending or fairy tale romance, though not all fairy tales end happily.

The older fairy tales were intended for an audience of adults as well as children, but they were associated with children as early as the writings of the *précieuses*. Folklorists have classified fairy tales in various ways. Among the most notable are the Aarne-Thompson classification system and the morphological analysis

of Vladimir Propp. Folklorists have tried to trace the history of fairy tale from every culture over many centuries.

Thus, the oral fairy tale may have existed for some time, although not perhaps recognized as a genre. Fairy tales, and works derived from fairy tales, are still written today. Other folklorists have interpreted the tales' significance, but no school has been definitively established for the meaning of the tales. Moreover, Jack Zipes has written extensively about the literary fairy tales and the need to define it. In one of his best articles on the subject, he writes in *The Oxford Companion to Fairy Tales* as:

> To expand and expound upon the subject and definition of literary fairy tales as a genre that distinguishes itself from the oral folktale in so far as it is written by single identifiable author, it is thus synthetic, artificial and elaborate in comparison to the indigenous formation of the folktale that emanates from communities and tends to be simple and anonymous. (321)

He further explains the difference between literary fairytale and the oral folktale. He does not entail that one genre is better than an other. But in fact, it can only be understood and defined by its relationship to the oral tales as well as to the legend, novella, novel and other literary fairy tales that it usually adapts and remodels during the narrative conception of the author.

As most of the parents and people were illiterate, these fairy tales were a major source of instruction and entertainment. The origin of fairy tales is a question which has kept many scholars confused and busy which has not yet been stated to the satisfaction of many. But the true worth of fairy tales in the past was not recognized by educated people until the middle of nineteenth century. The origins of fairy tales have been traced as far back as Egypt in the thirteenth century before Christ. When

manuscript copying and printing made possible the collection of these stories, they appeared as basic materials for such great storytellers of the middle ages like Chaucer, Boccaccio and others.

2.2. Types of Fairy Tales

A fairy tale is a snapshot of the way normal people lived at the various times of our life, making them often stark and harsh stories. The folktales of the past were the stories to entertain the peasants in a way that was very easy for them to relate to. Our lives are the fairy tales we hear as children and carry with us into adult life. Fairy tales come in many forms. Fairy tales do not normally come from high origins, rather the fairy tale are the peasant stories. They are the folklore of daily life, passed on for generations, and from village to village. Fairy tales do not tell us how to live and yet are relevant to understanding who we are. Noting this view in the *Uses of Enchantment*, child psychologist Bruno Bettelheim believed:

> No other literature better prepares children to meet the complexities of adult life than fairytales. Fairy tales provide freedom and aspiration to children far more than any other books. It teaches about the specific condition of life in modern mass society so these tales were created long before and has come into being till the present time. (72)

Here, we find integration of different personalities. These characters and personalities give effect to the story. Relating with this, the character distances him from the self and structures into different fictional characters. The character or the narrator detaches himself or herself away from the reality to fictional character to depict situations more realistically, vividly and structurally. Most of the fairy tales are stories of integration of a personality where the character generally recalls his or her past and assimilates that past with the present to give final shape to the narrative.

Although the fairy tale is a clearly distinct genre, the definition that marks a work as a fairy tale is a source of considerable dispute. Vladimir Propp, in his *Morphology of the Folktale*, criticized the common distinction between 'fairy tales' and 'animal tales' on the grounds that many tales contained both fantastic elements and animals. Nevertheless, to select works for his analysis, Propp used all Russian folktales classified as folklore in a cataloguing system that made such a distinction. His own analysis identified fairy tales by their plot elements.

One universally agreed-on factor is that the nature of a tale does *not* depend on whether fairies appear in it. Obviously, many people, including Angela Carter in her introduction to the *Virago Book of Fairy Tales*, have noted that a great many of so-called fairy tales do not feature fairies at all. This is partly because of the history of the English term 'fairy tale' which derives from the French phrase *conte de fées*, and was first used in the collection of Madame D'Aulnoy in 1697. Carter herself points out that talking animals and the presence of magic seem to be more common to the fairy tale than fairies themselves.

However, the mere presence of animals that talk does not make a tale a fairy tale, especially when the animal is clearly a mask on a human face, as in fables. Max Luthi argues that, fairy tales are equally important to adults. Not only do they learn to cope up the oedipal difficulties but also learn to face the world independently. Luthi in *The Fairy Tale as Art Form and Portrait of Man* equates the predicament of the modern man with that of the fairy tale hero and describes in this manner:

> He explores neither the world within nor the world around him. He wanders through the world and acts. He runs into the most valuable figures and enters into relationships with them, as adversary, disenchanter or suitor. Does what is right, without thinking much about

> it and often without realizing. Even when he sits down helplessly and weeps, he is acting properly: it is exactly his weeping which summons the helper. (141)

Some folklorists prefer to use the German term *Märchen* to refer to the genre, a practice given weight by the definition of Thompson in his 1977 edition of *The Folktale*. It is a tale of some length involving a succession of motifs or episodes. It moves in an unreal world without definite locality or definite creatures and is filled with the marvelous. In his essay *On Fairy-Stories*, J. R. R. Tolkien agreed with the exclusion of 'fairies' from the definition. He defined fairy tales as, "stories about the adventures of men in *Faërie*, the land of fairies, fairytale princesses, dwarves, elves, and not only other magical species but many other marvels. In this never-never land, humble heroes kill adversaries, succeed to kingdoms and marry princesses" (28). The characters and motifs of fairy tales are simple and archetypal. In them are present princesses and goose-girls, youngest sons and gallant princes, ogres, giants, dragons, and trolls, wicked stepmothers and false heroes, fairy godmothers and other magical helpers, often talking horses, or foxes, or birds, glass mountains, and prohibitions and breaking of prohibitions.

The fairy tale, told orally, is a sub-class of the folktale. Many writers have written in the form of the fairy tale. These are the literary fairy tales, or *Kunstmärchen*. The oldest forms, from *Panchatantra* to the *Pentamerone*, show considerable reworking from the oral form. The Brothers Grimm is among the first to try to preserve the features of oral tales. Yet the stories printed under the Grimm name have been considerably reworked to fit the written form. Literary fairy tales and oral fairy tales freely exchanged plots, motifs, and elements with each other and with the tales of foreign lands.

Many 18th century folklorists attempted to recover the “pure” folktale, uncontaminated by literary versions. Yet while oral fairy tales likely existed for thousands of years prior to the literary forms, there is no pure folktale. And each literary fairy tale draws on folk traditions, if only in parody. This makes it impossible to trace forms of transmission of a fairy tale. Oral story-tellers have been known to read literary fairy tales to increase their own stock of stories and treatments. The first collectors that attempted to preserve the plot and characters of the tale and also the style in which they were preserved, were the Grimm Brothers. Ironically enough, this meant although their first edition remains a treasure for folklorists, they rewrote the tales in later editions to make them more acceptable, which ensured their sales and the later popularity of their work.

Such literary forms did not merely draw from the folktale, but also influenced folktales in turn. The consideration of whether to keep *Sleeping Beauty* reflected a belief common among folklorists of the 19th century. The folk tradition preserved fairy tales in forms from pre-history except when contaminated by such literary forms, leading people to tell inauthentic tales. The rural, illiterate, and uneducated peasants, if suitably isolated, were the folk and would tell pure folk tales. Jacob and Wilhelm Grimm saw fairytales as remnants of ancient myths, playful descendants of ancient intuitive vision of human life.

Grimm describes the methods of storyteller Frau Riemann and recounts her stories thoughtfully, accurately with common vividness and evident delight. Their contemporaries took their retelling as their face value and began to recognize ethnographic worth of folk tale and the importance of preserving the language in which the stories were told. The two brothers did not retell the fairy tales exactly as they heard them but carefully edited them, simplifying or embellishing them

according to their poetic inclinations and pedagogical intentions. Thus Grimm brothers and their tales certainly opened the gates to a new world of folktales as a distinct genre. Sometimes they regarded fairy tales as a form of fossil, the remnants of a once-perfect tale. However, we can say that fairy tales never had a fixed form, and regardless of literary influence, the tellers constantly altered them for their own purposes. The work of the Brothers Grimm influenced other collectors, both inspiring them to collect tales and leading them to believe that the fairy tales of a country were particularly representative of it. Ethnographers collected fairy tales over the world, finding similar tales in Africa, the Americas, and Australia. They also encouraged other collectors of fairy tales.

George Watson in *The Story of the Fairy Tale* says that two theories of origins have attempted to explain the common elements in fairy tales found spread over continents. He writes that, "one is that a single point of origin generated any given tale, which then spread over the centuries. The other is that such fairy tales stem from common human experience and therefore can appear separately in many different origins" (40). Fairy tales with very similar plots, characters, and motifs are found spread across different cultures. Many people hold this to be caused by the spread of such tales, as people repeat tales they have heard in foreign lands, although the oral nature makes it impossible to trace the route except by inference.

Folklorists have attempted to determine the origin by internal evidence, which can not always be clear. Originally, adults were the audience of a fairy tale just as often as children. Literary fairy tales appeared in works intended for adults, but in the 19th and 20th centuries the fairy tale came to be associated with children's literature. The *précieuses*, intended their works for adults, but regarded their source as the tales that servants, or other women of lower class, would tell to children. The Grimm

Brothers titled their collection *Children's and Household Tales* and rewrote their tales after complaints that they were not suitable for children. In the modern era, fairy tales were altered so that they could be readable to children.

The Grimm Brothers concentrated mostly on eliminating sexual references. Rapunzel, in the first edition, revealed the prince's visits by asking why her clothing had grown tight, thus letting the witch deduce that she was pregnant, but in subsequent editions carelessly revealed that it was easier to pull up the prince than the witch. The moralizing strain in the Victorian era altered the classical tales to teach lessons. The nineteenth century discovery of folktale was followed by waves of scholarly research each with its own version of the origin.

By 1960's a tremendous vogue of writing and circulating literary fairy tales had been set in motion for children and adults. After different scholars, critics researched this genre and various perspectives changed, modern students of folklore follow the scheme of study that was originated in Finland. Now these stories are premeditated not only by type but by motif which is the smallest elements in tale having a power to persist within a specific tradition. In contemporary literature, many authors have used the form of fairy tales for various reasons, such as examining the human condition from the simple framework a fairytale provides. Some authors seek to recreate a sense of the fantastic in a contemporary discourse.

Some writers use fairy tale forms for modern issues. Sometimes, especially in children's literature, fairy tales are retold with a twist simply for comic effect, such as *The Stinky Cheese Man* by Jon Scieszka. A common comic motif is a world where all the fairy tales take place, and the characters are aware of their role in the story. Other authors may have specific motives, such as multicultural or feminist reevaluations of predominantly Eurocentric masculine-dominated fairy tales, implying critique of

older narratives. The figure of the damsel in distress has been particularly attacked by many feminist critics.

Other notable figures who have employed fairy tales include Oscar Wilde, A. S. Byatt, Jane Yolen, Terri Windling, Donald Barthelme, Robert Coover, Margaret Atwood, Kate Bernheimer, Espido Freire, Tanith Lee, James Thurber, Robin McKinley, Kelly Link, Donna Jo Napoli, Cameron Dokey, Robert Bly, Gail Carson Levine, Jasper Fforde and many others. It may be hard to lay down the rule between fairy tales and fantasies that use fairy tale motifs, or even whole plots, but the distinction is commonly made, even within the works of a single author.

2.3. Propp's Structure of Fairy Tale

The most notable distinction is that fairy tale fantasies like other fantasies; it makes use of novelistic writing conventions of prose, characterization, or setting. Any comparison of fairy tales quickly discovers that many fairy tales have features in common with each other. Two of the most influential classifications are those of Antti Aarne, as revised by Stith Thompson into the Aarne-Thompson classification system, and Vladimir Propp's *Morphology of the Folk Tale*.

The *Morphology of the Folktale* (1928) was an attempt to reduce all folktales to one structure. Where, in the Formalist approach, sentence structures had been broken down into analyzable elements known as morphemes. Propp used this method by analogy to analyze folk tales. By breaking down a large number of Russian folk tales into their smallest narrative units, Propp was able to arrive at a typology of narrative structures. By analyzing types of characters and kinds of action, Propp was able to arrive at the conclusion that there were thirty-one generic narrations in the Russian folk tale. While not all are present, he found that all the tales he analyzed

displayed the functions in an unvarying sequence. Chandler Harriss says that Propp's formula could also be applied to television as well. He says:

> The literary analysis methods of scholar Vladimir Propp can be used to study the narratives of television programs to reveal plot functions regarding the presentation of mysteries and their resolution. Propp's methods, which were developed to study folktales, focus on narrative structures such as repeated actions and plot elements as a way of defining genres. (45)

Propp argues that all fairy tales are constructed of certain plot elements, which he called functions, and that these elements consistently occur in a uniform sequence. Based on a study of one hundred folk tales, Propp devises a list of thirty-one generic functions, proposing that they encompassed all of the plot components from which fairy tales are constructed. Contending that fairy tales can be studied and compared by examining their most basic plot components, Formalist Vladimir Propp develops an analysis that reduces fairy tales to a series of actions performed by the dramatis personae in each story.

Propp asserts that any combination of his functions will create a viable story. The generator works by randomly choosing a possible interpretation of a function and stringing them together to create a story. The result is usually an oddly coherent narrative, flitting in and out of focus, but with large parts of it obfuscated and obscured. It is in these holes, this slippage that Proppian analysis fails. Proppian analysis also fails in the lack of consideration given to other such literary devices as voice, tone, and theme all of which are as vital to the construction of a compelling narrative as structural events. After the initial situation is depicted, the tale takes the following sequence:

1. A member of a family leaves home (the hero is introduced).
2. An interdiction is addressed to the hero ('do not go there', 'go to this place').

3. The inter-diction is violated (villain enters the tale).
4. The villain makes an attempt at reconnaissance (either villain tries to find the children/jewels etc; or intended victim questions the villain).
5. The villain gains information about the victim.
6. The villain attempts to deceive the victim to take possession of victim or victim's belongings (trickery; villain disguised, tries to win confidence of victim).
7. The victim taken in by deception, unwittingly helping the enemy.
8. The villain causes harm/injury to family member (by abduction, theft of magical agent, spoiling crops, plunders in other forms, causes a disappearance, expels someone, casts spell on someone, substitutes child etc, commits murder, imprisons/detains someone, threatens forced marriage, provides nightly torments); Alternatively, a member of family lacks something or desires something (magical potion etc).
9. Misfortune or lack is made known, (hero is dispatched, hears call for help etc/ alternative is that victimized hero is sent away, freed from imprisonment).
10. Seeker agrees to, or decides upon counter-action.
11. Hero leaves home.
12. Hero is tested, interrogated, attacked etc, preparing the way for his/her receiving magical agent or helper (donor).
13. Hero reacts to actions of future donor (withstands/fails the test, frees captive. reconciles disputants, performs service, uses adversary's powers against them).
14. Hero acquires use of a magical agent (directly transferred, located, purchased, prepared, spontaneously appears, eaten/drunk, help offered by other characters).
15. Hero is transferred, delivered or led to whereabouts of an object of the search.
16. Hero and villain join in direct combat.

17. Hero is branded (wounded/marked, receives ring or scarf).
18. Villain is defeated (killed in combat, defeated in contest, killed while asleep, and banished).
19. Initial misfortune or lack is resolved (object of search distributed, spell broken, slain person revived, captive freed).
20. Hero returns.
21. Hero is pursued (pursuer tries to kill, eat, undermine the hero).
22. Hero is rescued from pursuit (obstacles delay pursuer, hero hides or is hidden, hero transforms unrecognizably, hero saved from attempt on his/her life).
23. Hero unrecognized, arrives home or in another country.
24. False hero presents unfounded claims.
25. Difficult task proposed to the hero (trial by ordeal, riddles, test of strength/endurance, and other tasks).
26. Task is resolved.
27. Hero is recognized (by mark, brand, or thing given to him/her).
28. False hero or villain is exposed.
29. Hero is given a new appearance (is made whole, handsome, new garments etc).
30. Villain is punished.
31. Hero marries and ascends the throne (is rewarded/promoted). (Propp, 63)

Occasionally, some of these functions are inverted, as when the hero receives something while still at home, the function of a donor occurring early. More often, a function is negated twice, so that it must be repeated three times. Pier Paolo Piciucco suggests that Propp's outline of the fairytale could be used to study a difficult story like *Wuthering Heights* as:

> Many of the difficulties we experience in understanding *Wuthering Heights* are removed when it is regarded as a fairy tale. Yet, even then, the novel does not fit the standard

> structures proposed, for example, by Vladimir Propp. Some of the difficulties which have prevented previous critics from seeing fairy-structures as central to an interpretation of Wuthering Heights are removed when we combine this perspective with the well-established narcissistic framework of the story. (223)

Use of Proppian analysis reveals that fairy tales do share several similarities interms of basic plot element. However, attempted Proppian analyses of several tales reveals that, his claim of a uniform plot progression does not hold. According to Propp, a cohesive story can be formed by connecting a series of any set of the thirty-one functions in order. This project explores this component of Propp's argument by randomly generating a fairy tale from selected functions. Each function has several passages written specifically to express that function, and the generator will randomly select one passage for each selected function. While each passage appropriately expresses its respective plot element, the tone, characters, and settings may vary. The randomly generated fairy tale demonstrates that it is necessary to consider several other elements besides plot components in order to create a cohesive and well-written tale. Propp also concludes that all the characters can be divided into 7 broad character types in the hundred tales he analyzed:

1. The villain struggles against the hero.
2. The donor prepares the hero or gives the hero some magical object.
3. The (magical) helper helps the hero in the quest.
4. The princess and or her father give the task to the hero, identifies the false hero, marry the hero, often sought for during the narrative. Propp noted that functionally, the princess and the father can not be clearly distinguished.
5. The dispatcher character that makes the lack known and sends the hero off.
6. The hero or victim/seeker hero reacts to the donor, weds the princess.

7. False hero/anti-hero/usurper takes credit for the hero's actions or tries to marry the princess. (Propp, 128)

These roles could sometimes be distributed among various characters, as the hero kills the villain dragon, and the dragon's sisters take on the villainous role of chasing him. Conversely, one character could engage in acts as more than one role, as a father could send his son on the quest and give him a sword, acting as both dispatcher and donor. Hasan El-Shamy comments on Peter Gilet's assessment where he presents an inclusive picture of the Proppian system in relation to the majority of morphological constructs and collateral theoretical schema as:

> The principal refinement that Gilet introduced to Propp's system of thirty-one 'Functions' (narrative moves) is its reduction to five Functions. These are still drawn from the action of the story-line, and will almost always be present in a given story. To these five so-called Functions he added a division in the hero's world between a normal realm, and, a state or place which is ruled by a dangerous being endowed with magic powers. Gilet labeled this site 'An Other World.' The rationale for this addition is that it is essential to the correct mapping of any tale of this sort since without it all Functions remain unsituated and to that extent ambiguous. (52)

Propp's approach has been criticized for removing all verbal considerations from the analysis, even though the folktale's form is almost always oral, and also all considerations of tone, mood, character, and, anything that differentiates one fairy tale from another. Structuralist Claude Lévi-Strauss used Propp's monograph on the *Morphology of the Folktale* to demonstrate the superiority of the structuralist approach, and the shortcomings of the Formalist approach. Defenders of Propp

believe that that such criticisms are largely redundant, as Propp's approach was not intended to unearth meaning in the fairy tales he examined, nor to find the elements that differentiate one tale from another, but to unearth the elemental building blocks that formed the basis of their narrative structure.

The study of the fairy tale may be compared in many respects to that of organic formation in nature. Both the naturalist and the folklorist deal with species and varieties which are essentially the same. With entirely different aims and focuses Kirkpatrick and Milne each illustrate and evaluate some of the varied ways in which studies of folklore during the last fifty years have become, for better or for worse, a part of biblical criticism. The results are both instructive and sobering. Burke O. Long, reviews their work in relation to Propp's and writes:

> Her goal is to provide a systematic examination of Propp's major work and to evaluate its potential for biblical studies. She concludes that the very precise structural model which Propp developed for analyzing the Russian "heroic fairy tale" offers a useful, though limited, tool for studying surface narratival structure in the Bible and for dealing with the problem of identifying particular literary genres. In Part I of her book M. expounds Propp's method as developed in Morphology and identifies the historical and intellectual contexts in which to appreciate Propp's pioneering efforts. She demonstrates the originality of his break with the established modes of 19th-century comparative study of folktales, and his contribution to this century's development of linguistic models for studying such narratives. (79)

Propp's next book, *The Historical Roots of the Magic Tale* (1946), seeks to show that folktales originated in ritual, especially initiation and funeral rites. In 1948,

along with other Soviet scholars, Propp comes under official attack. His *Morphology* is criticized for being too formalist, and his *Historical Roots* was said to be too dependent on Western scholarship to place Russian narrative in a global context.

All fairy tales by nature are orally transmitted and are therefore simple and understandable to children and everyone else. The plot of all almost fairy tales is formulaic, tightly structured pattern of actions, inviting and figurative reading. These tales follow traditional introduction and conclusion, optimistic structure, quest involving test of characters such as moral, physical and psychological. Every thing complexity in initial stage is at last simplified into reality. All fairytales generally have flat representative characters who are basically stereotypical and archetypal; characters are revealed primarily through their actions and differing natures.

As a distinct form of literature, fairy tales have different functions and aspects, even through their main distinct importance lies in helping children cope with psychological problems of growing up and integrating their personalities. The fairy tale is not only a distinct form of art portraying imperishable, eternal world and wisdom but also significant in the manner in which it describes that world, its external appearance which varies from people to people and from narrator to narrator and delights us. Through the retellings over centuries fairy tales have become more refined. They have come at the same time with overt and covert meaning according to time and address at all levels of human personality. Thus, communicating to people belonging to every age Mircea Eliade in *The Uses of Enchantment* describes:

> Fairytales are expression of a psycho drama that answers the deep need in the human being. Every man wants to experience certain perilous situations, to confront exceptional ordeal to make his way into the

> other world and he experience all this, on the level of his imaginative life by hearing or reading fairytales. (35)

Therefore, for this reason fairy tales carry important messages to the conscious, preconscious and unconscious mind. Depending on what level each is functioning at a time by dealing with universal human problems, these stories preoccupy the child's mind to help them develop their budding ego. It also rearranges, ruminates, and fantasizes a child and fits unconscious content into conscious fantasies which enable them to deal with their ego development.

In conclusion, we can say that fairytales readers are as old as the history of human civilization. It is a literary form which has been passed down through different ages and phases in different forms and aspects till the present time. Children find these narratives interesting and influencing because of its presentation of unusual life, the way the bet and animals speak, many different discoveries, heroic adventures, growing experience, poverty, family problems, cultural clashes, war, robbery, death, hard struggle of life, beautiful places, foods, desires of selfhood, external environment, and inner psychological problems which they have heard from their elders.

Chapter III: Perception of Fairytale in *The Alchemist*

The protagonist of the story in *The Alchemist* is generally an orphan boy or a girl who performs several tasks to solve problems and lives happily ever after. The other characters like villain and helpers are supernatural and less active than the protagonist but play significant role in completing the task. In a fairy tale the protagonist sets his journey into a forest where he finds flowers, animals, different creatures. He faces difficulties with nature and with himself which become an important part of the plot as well as the development process of the characters. Santiago's description in *The Alchemist* resembles the above blueprint of many fai tales.

In our secular world, there is little place for myth, and as we grow older fairy tales become little more than silly bedtime stories. Every now and then, a modern fairytale appears. *The Alchemist* is just such a book. It is a fable about following our destiny and for people who finds themselves caught up in the day-to-day responsibilities of family, work, and life. When we are very young, we are narrated beautiful fairytales that are meant to enrich our imaginations with images of magic and mysticism and impart wisdom through morals and life lessons. One day that stops and we are instead thrown into an education of scientific facts and history. *The Alchemist* is something akin to a "Life's Instruction Book" contained in a simple yet magical story. Craft fully disguised within the tale of Santiago, the gypsy woman, the King, and the alchemist, *The Alchemist* is a guide to our very own story, just like a fairy tale.

The story may be as trivial as a boy looking for treasure in the Pyramids but it is this same triviality that makes the lessons bound therein stick in our minds, captivating us just as when we were small listening and reading fairy tales. Translated

in more than forty languages, *The Alchemist* has sold more then twenty million copies worldwide and is considered a fairy tale for adults. Fairytales are found in the history of folklore. The term 'fairytale' is loosely applied to folktales and to modern fairy stories. They generally have no author and simply developed only through the centuries. Surprisingly, the same stories with variations appeared in many countries and became popular. Following this trend, *The Alchemist* is such a book. Coelho's writing is beautifully poetic. His message is about the essential wisdom of listening to our heart.

3.1. Santiago's Odyssey to the Pyramids

Santiago's odyssey seems to be a representation for all of mankind. The Alchemist uses the story of young Santiago's search for his personal legend as an allegory for everyman's struggle to break from the comfortable confines of conformity and pursue his life dreams. Everyone, all of us has a treasure that is waiting to be found like Santiago's. When we want something with all our heart, we come close to living our personal legend. The closer we get, the more that legend becomes our reason for living. Therefore we must listen to our heart just like Santiago, because that is where we will find our treasure.

After listening to "the signs" (24), the boy ventures in his personal, journey of exploration and self-discovery, symbolically searching for a hidden treasure located near the pyramids in Egypt. As in the Proppian analysis, Santiago leaves his native Spain to search for his treasure. Melchizedek, the King of Salem, spontaneously appears to help motivate Santiago to fulfill his personal legend, or his soul's desire, which seems bound to be the treasure of his dream. He is directed by the King to go in search of his quest and to follow the dream that he had seen. Melchizedek is the most intriguing character in *The Alchemist*. Since no one knows who he is, where he comes

from or where he goes, he remains the mystery man of the book. Melchizedek helps Santiago to embark on his journey says:

> Whoever you are, or whatever it is you do, when you really want something, it is because the desire originated in the soul of the universe. It's your mission on earth. The Soul of the World is nourished by people's happiness. And also by unhappiness, envy and jealousy. To realize one's destiny is a person's only real obligation. God has prepared a path for everyone to follow. You just have to read the Omens that he left for you. (23)

Santiago travels from a comfortable lifestyle as a carer of sheep to the Arabian Desert where he weathers the hardships to meet the great Alchemist. In *The Alchemist,* the charming tale of Santiago, the shepherd boy, who dreams of seeing the world, is compelling. The novel gains resonance through the many lessons Santiago learns during his adventures. He journeys from Spain to Morocco in search of worldly success, and eventually to Egypt, where a fateful encounter with an alchemist brings him at last to self-understanding and spiritual enlightenment. Santiago learns many lessons, from the wise old alchemist. The desert is a place of death, thirst, illusions and the best place to overcome fear. The message is clear. As we become more deeply embedded in a consumer world of material possessions, we fall further from the dreams we have as children.

Like a fairy tale, the crux of the fable is that when we truly want something, the forces in the world work to help us achieve it, but only if we gratefully accept and gain the knowledge along the way, and it is within this knowledge that meaning can be found. The King of Salem begins his conversation with Santiago with the theme of destiny as the boy didn't know what a person's 'destiny' was. The King answers:

> It's what you have always wanted to accomplish. Everyone, when they are young, knows what their destiny is. At that point in their lives, everything is clear and everything is possible. They are not afraid to dream, and to yearn for everything they would like to see happen to them in their lives. But, as time passes, a mysterious force begins to convince them that it will be impossible for them to realize their destiny. (22)

As in other fairytales, misfortune grips Santiago. He has many setbacks but eventually he reaches his destination. Santiago sells all of his possessions to fund his journey to Africa and travels there. When he arrives, however, a thief steals all of his money. Santiago spends the next year or so working at a crystal merchant's shop learning both Arabic and life lessons. After working at the crystal shop for a year, Santiago earns enough money to cover his losses and return home. However it is his journey that is his real treasure. He learns better how to read the omens and discovers their importance. They are the voice of the Soul of the World speaking directly to him. He learns how to listen to his heart, to understand when it is lying and when it is telling the truth. He finds true love, an unending perfect love, the kind of love only found in fairy tales.

Like in traditional fairy tales, Santiago acquires use of magical agent by aligning with the alchemist in his odyssey. To aid him interpreting omens, he presents him with Urim and Thummim stones, used for divination. To attain his material treasure Santiago must undergo a spiritual transformation, a process that parallels the alchemical transformation of lead into gold. When Santiago finally reaches the Pyramids, he is attacked by the desert's inhabitants, the villains in fairytales.

Santiago has to admit that he is searching for a treasure there. They tend to deceive Santiago and take away all his possessions. One of them laughs and reveals that he once had a dream about finding treasure in the very church where Santiago first had the dream. As fortune favors the hero, Santiago then returns to the church and finds the treasure, thus realizing his dream. While fruitlessly digging for the treasure, the leader shook Santiago and tells him:

> We're leaving. You're not going to die. You'll live, and you'll learn that a man shouldn't be so stupid. Two years ago, right here on this spot, I had a recurrent dream, too. I dreamed that I should travel to the fields of Spain and look for a ruined church where shepherds and their sheep slept. In my dream, there was a sycamore growing out of the ruins of the sacristy, and I was told that, if I dug at the roots of the sycamore, I would find a hidden treasure. But I'm not so stupid as to cross an entire desert just because of a recurrent dream. (172)

Written with the flavor of a medieval romance in the style of a fairy tale, *The Alchemist* mixes elements of myth and legend from historical and biblical sources to create its own reality. Melchizedek appears in Tarifa to assist Santiago in his quest of destiny, providing him with the magical stones of Urim and Thummim, found in Exodus in the description of the building of the Mishkan and the design of the priestly garments.

Melchizedek reminds us of his moments with Abraham, a few centuries before his date with Santiago in Tarifa. He is not the only ancient in the book, for Santiago meets with the Alchemist of the Sahara desert who is at least two hundred years old and knows the secrets of the Philosopher's Stone and the Elixir of Life and comments

that the problem with medieval alchemists were that they were only after gold and therefore failed in the transformation of lead. The alchemist says:

> Men have never understood the words of the wise. So gold, instead of being seen as a symbol of being seen as a symbol of evolution, became the basis for conflict. I have known true alchemists. They locked themselves in their laboratories, and tried to evolve, as gold had. And they found the philosopher's stone, because they understood that when something evolves, everything around that thing evolves as well. (144)

Although a past seminarian, Santiago does not recognize the name Melchizedek, indicating the alienation of Catholic and Jewish faith through the Great Inquisition. In confronting his Arab brothers, he views them as victims worthy of slaughter under the foot of Christendom, but within a few hours, he comprehends that each person is made of skin and blood. He comes to this through misfortune which becomes the impetus for his search for his destiny. The old king states that the world's greatest lie is that, "at some point during our lives, we lose control of what's happening to us, and our lives become controlled by fate" (25).

3.2. Santiago's Lesson From Destiny

Each thing has its own destiny and place and influence upon the universe. Each metal has its quality and place whether copper, silver, gold or lead and man has a tendency to forget about the lesson of the sixth day. The secret of alchemy is not in learning bad chemistry, but listening to the Soul of the Universe. Santiago departs his familiar world of sheep and pastures to travel across the strait into another alien sphere where he initially perceives the inhabitants of Tangiers to be infidels under the foot of Saint Santiago Maramoto, worthy of slaughter. His prejudices and preconceptions are challenged through experience. He recognizes that he was like

everyone else in wanting to see the world in terms of what he wanted to believe, rather than actuality.

The first notable omen is that when Santiago brought a tenth of his sheep to the King of Salem as part of an agreement for the king to help him find the treasure. As in fairy tales, being able to observe and read omens is a key motif throughout the book. His friend had bought the rest of his sheep, hoping to become a shepherd, and thought that this was a good omen. Now Santiago can carry out his journey of finding the treasure because he sold all of his sheep. Second, Santiago recognizes the hole in his pouch in which Urim and Thummin fell out of in Tangier as an omen, as he had promised the old king that he would make his own decisions, not let the stones do it for him. The crystal merchant of Tangier recognizes Santiago's presence in the shop as an omen, as two customers came into the shop as he was cleaning the crystals for the merchant. Santiago later finds that going to the desert was a good omen, as he was able to meet Fatima, his love. Santiago reads omens in the flight of two hawks and has a premonition of an attack on the oasis as he is in the Sahara Desert. Omens play a key role in the unraveling of Santiago's fate. Santiago is awestruck when he sees his love, Fatima for the first time when:

> At that moment, it seemed to him that time stood still, and the Soul of the World surged within him. When he looked into her dark eyes, and saw that her lips were poised between a laugh and silence, he learned the most important part of the language that all the world spoke- the language that everyone on earth was capable of understanding in their heart. It was love. (97)

People who want to follow their personal legend must instruct their heart to speak up and never stop talking to them. This is why *The Alchemist* makes us

understand more about ourselves and about life. It has philosophy, and is spiced with colors, flavors, and subjects, like a fairytale. Life is in the journey, not the destination. Santiago set off to find his "pot of gold" (44), and after a long journey during which he grew mentally, emotionally, and spiritually, he finally discovers the location of the treasure. He follows the directions and finds it right where he started. Behind the magical mysterious story of Santiago, seeking his true destiny and meeting many people will shape the rest of his life along the way. By paying attention to the details in the world around him, which serve as omens guiding him towards his goal, young Santiago becomes an alchemist in his own right, spinning unfavorable circumstances into riches.

3.3. Santiago's Spiritual Enlightenment

Santiago is a boy living in Andalusia. An interdiction is addressed to him from the unknown powers. One day he has a dream telling him to go to the Egyptian pyramids, a destination pointed out to him by a child in-dream and apparently leading to treasure. Therefore, he leaves home and on the way faces many obstacles like the hero in traditional fairytales. After a long eventful journey he discovers that his treasure is right where he started, in Spain. It is here that Santiago, who had recently chosen not to become a priest, dreams of his treasure, and it is here that he will finally find it, buried among the roots of the tree, after he returns from his pilgrimage to the pyramids. He returns home triumphantly and looks up at heaven and shouts:

> You old sorcerer. You knew the whole story. You even left a bit of gold at the monastery so I could get back to this church. The monk laughed when he saw me come back in tatters. Couldn't you have saved me from that? Why did you have to make me go through this journey? You must have known all the while that it is here. (176)

Santiago learns the basics of life from the learned alchemist, who becomes a father figure to him. When they are captured by a desert tribe, the boy finds out how to transform himself into the wind. The tribesmen become so impressed that they let the two go. The alchemist uses the Philosopher's Stone to turn lead into gold. He leaves some for both a monk and Santiago and takes the rest for himself**.** Before departing, The Alchemist advises Santiago to:

> Listen to your heart. It knows all things, because it came from the Soul of the World, and it will one day return there. Wherever your heart is, that is where you'll find your treasure. Your heart is alive. Keep listening to what it has to say. Even if you pretend not to have heard what it tells you, it will always be there inside you, repeating to you what you're thinking about life and about the world. (136)

The alchemist imparts these words of wisdom to Santiago when Santiago begins to doubt and question. The alchemist is the only man who is said to be able to turn lead into gold and turn fair weather into storms. Santiago is able to meet the living legend and stumbles upon many self-realizations and gains the wisdom that will make him able to be the next Alchemist. The language and the plot of *The Alchemist* are romantic, mysterious and naïve. But, as in most fairy tales, the purpose embedded in the story is to instruct the reader about how to live his or her life.

The real alchemy here, however, is the transmuting of youthful idealism into mature wisdom. The blending of conventional ideas with an exotic setting makes old truths seem new again. Santiago, the shepherd takes the advice learning to trust his heart and commune with it as a treasured friend. The story has the comic charm, dramatic tension and psychological intensity of a fairy tale, but it is full of specific wisdom as well, about becoming self-empowered, overcoming depression, and

believing in dreams. To believe in his dreams, the alchemist says Santiago, “When a person really desires something, all the universe conspires to help that person to realize his dream.” (120).

Through parable, Coelho takes us on a spiritual journey that borders on fairytale, introducing elements of past legends with the ubiquitous Englishman of the desert in search of the Philosopher’s Stone and the ability to transform lead into gold. Through the use of parable, Coelho examines the conflicts between the three great religions and the baggage of prejudice. Santiago meets and confronts the dangerous winds of the desert, overcoming them through his courage and persuasion while engulfing his challengers with the mighty winds of the *simum* as recorded in the Histories of Herodotus when 50,000 men vanished into a sandstorm.

The spiritual influence of this book is omniscient. In *The Alchemist*, a kind of spiritual enlightenment is accomplished by fulfilling one’s Personal Legend, and adding to the Soul of the World, which is the light of most religions. Santiago also learns the language of the world, which is basically the language of the Soul of the World. As the Soul of the World is related to the Soul of God, Santiago is able to perform miracles after he has reached into the Soul of the World.

The two alchemy objects are physical representations of the Soul of the World, the Master Work, which is the result of completely purifying metals. The Philosopher’s Stone, being completely pure and powerful as the Soul of the World, has the property of turning metals into gold, the most advanced and purest of all metals. The Elixir of Life cures all illnesses and gives immortality. These objects represent the purity in the world, and in trying to reach their Personal Legend. But in the course of his travel, Santiago even thinks of abandoning his journey as:

> I know why I want to get back to my flock, he thought. I understand sheep; they' they're no longer a problem, and they can be good friends. on the other hand, I don't know if the desert can be a friend and it' know if the desert can be a friend and it's in the desert that I have to search for my treasure. If I don't find it, I can always go home. I finally have enough money, and all the time I need. Why not? (67)

Santiago tells the desert that it shows love for the alchemist's falcon by offering it game, after which the falcon shows love to man as it offers the game to eat, and the man shows love for the desert as after one dies, his body is reintegrated into the desert sands. Love is described as a part of the Soul of the World. Love occurs in life and Nature, as everything supports each other. There is also love in people, demonstrated by Santiago's love of Fatima's beauty, and Santiago knows that it is part of his personal legend to love her. Also, there is true love, a brief definition given by the alchemist, "True love is love that allows you to reach your Personal Legend" (123).

3.4. The Imparting of Wisdom

The personal legend is one's reason for living. It is essentially one's goal in life. Everyone in the world has a personal legend. *The Alchemist* is a symbolic story that urges its readers to follow their dreams. It is a fairy tale, the story of a young man, who discovers, pursues and finally achieves his dream. Although our personal legend is what we were born to accomplish, we alone make the choice of how to live our life. The personal legend of a person surfaces early in his/her life, and one can never find true happiness without fulfilling it. Since it is a choice and not a destiny, we may be able to live several personal legends during the course of one life. Santiago's, the shepherd's personal legend is clear. His quest is to find his treasure at

the Egyptian pyramids. The alchemist had already fulfilled his personal legend, which was to become a true alchemist and learn the Master Work. Describing himself as an alchemist, the alchemist says:

> I'm an alchemist simply because I'm an alchemist. I learned the science from my grandfather, who learned from his faher, and so on, back to the creation of the world. In those times, the master work could be written simply on an emerald. But men began to reject simple things, and to write tracts, interpretation, and philosophical studies. They also began to feel that they knew a better way than others had. Yet his emerald Tablet is still alive today. (132)

The personal legend drove Santiago to his treasure, and the alchemist to become the most famed alchemist in the world. The crystal merchant's personal legend was to visit Mecca, and the Tarifa baker's personal legend was to travel the world, but these two characters chose not to follow their dreams. The Tarifa baker and the crystal merchant shape their lives for the perpetual want of fulfillment. We can make the choice to live our legend at any time, but it is, perhaps, easiest to make it as a young person, when everything seems clear and possible. It becomes more difficult as we get older, when the choice often seems to involve giving up what we have become accustomed to in order to get what we want.

Every day is a good day to die, if the day is lived in fulfillment of a dream. Dreams can only be accomplished with courage, taking a step into the unknown and not regretting the past, just as Santiago did. Through presenting stereotypes of characters-the Gypsy, the Alchemist-and then destroying them through realistic dialogue and conflicts, Coehlo urges us like Santiago, to embark at any moment on

our destiny to capture our dreams. The king explains to Santiago about the "mysterious force" and how:

> It's a force that appears to be negative, but actually shows you how to realize you destiny. It prepares your spirit and your will, because their is one great truth on this planet: whoever you are, or whatever it is that you do, when you really something, it's because that desire originated in the soul of the universe. It's your mission on earth. (23)

For, instance, after being caught by the tribal chief, Santiago is able to turn him into the wind, demonstrate his power, and is released. While this point of view strongly supports that will has a stronger hold on one's destiny, later events, such as Santiago and the alchemist being caught by warring tribes, demonstrate fate's hold on their life. However, in every situation where fate does take over, the Santiago and others are capable to excavate themselves from the situation. By mixing the familiar and using the elements of fairytale, Melchizedek as the fairy godmother and the search for treasure, Coelho takes the reader on a spiritual journey in which he confronts himself and the value of his own dreams and aspirations.

The theme of luck is prominent in *The Alchemist* just like in fairy tale. As the old king and the alchemist both tell Santiago about how if one really wants to fulfill his/her personal legend, the whole universe will conspire to help make it happen. This refers to the idea of beginner's luck, or the concept of favorability. Santiago is blessed with beginner's luck, when he decides to go to Africa. He manages to sell all of his sheep very easily, and is given a taste of success that whets the appetite to fulfill one's Personal Legend. We know early what is our ability and mission in life, but often we find ourselves intimidated by it or unworthy of carrying it and so shunt our dreams

aside and indulge in fantasy instead. Acting as a fairy, the king says that he is always omniscient over all the people. He says:

> Not always in this way, but I always appear in one form or another. Sometimes I appear in the form of a solution, or a good idea. At other times, at a crucial moment, I make it easier for things to happen. There are other things I do, too, but most of the time people don't realize I've done them. (24)

The novel skillfully combines words of wisdom, philosophy, and simplicity of meaning and language. It is the kind of novel that tells us that everything is possible as long as we really want it to happen. In this way, we can say that *The Alchemist* is an exciting novel that bursts with optimism and may appeal to everybody, because we can all identify with Santiago. The novel tends to follow a fairytale pattern. All of us have dreams, and are dying for somebody to tell us that they may come true. The novel tells the tale of Santiago, a boy who has a dream and the courage to follow it.

Chapter IV: *The Alchemist* as a Moral Fairy Tale

Coelho's strategy for revealing the truth to Santiago is a significant aspect for the novel. By following the structural pattern of the traditional fairy tale, Coelho creates psychological intensity to overcome depression and isolation through dream like use of elements. *The Alchemist* is a remarkable tale about the most magical of all journeys. Ingredients of a fairy tale can be found in the novel. Elements like dreams, alchemists, comic charm, embedded moral to the novel, spiritual enlightenment, kings and shepherds, all go to reinforce that *The Alchemist* is designed on the trajectory of a fairy tale. Most fairy tales teach that inherently all men are good. But as people come across varying nature in the real life then they distinguish between two sides of life: good and evil. There is a clear polarization of good and bad, selfish and helpful, beautiful and ugly, virtuous and vile, active and lazy. *The Alchemist* seems to teach us the readers in a similar way, through the odyssey of Santiago.

The Alchemist is an enlightening story about a shepherd's quest to find his treasure. Santiago meets with strange characters like, the king of Salem who helps him embark on the journey. Along the way, he encounters helpful guides as well as seemingly insurmountable obstacles. *The Alchemist* is narrated like a fairy tale. People are afraid to pursue their most important dreams, because they feel that they do not deserve them, or that they will be unable to achieve them. The treasure has been buried in Egyptian pyramid. Santiago is constantly tested along the way, yet he continues to listen to the murmurings of his heart, which are never wrong. Santiago learns about love along the way and helps others to face their fears as well. On the way of finding his treasure, the boy meets different people and passes through different nations.

As he nears the end of his journey, he finds, in an ironic twist, that it isn't what or where he thought is was. Yet Santiago went to pursue his dream of finding his treasure and though at times we see and feel his fear, but along his journey, he learned to listen to his heart and to trust what his heart teaches him. *The Alchemist* is inspiring, imaginative and captivating. It has the feel of a fairy tale from a time as hazy as the desert in which it is set, and carries the lessons on life. As in a fairy tale, *The Alchemist* instructs us that we must not cease from exploring and the end of all our exploring will be to arrive where we began and to know the place for the first time. The prose in the book is extremely simple, giving *The Alchemist* the feel of a children's fairy tale. The story is good and the moral is even better. It is a search for treasure, a spiritual quest, understanding what love is. There is a wise old king, a shop with not so sparkling crystal glasses, thieves, a gypsy, dreams, talking elements, treasure, love, an emerald tablet and the alchemist.

It is a novel that combines an atmosphere of medieval mysticism with the song of the desert. The book inspires the reader and preaches the importance of following one's dreams. It helps the reader understand the omens strewn around in one's path. *The Alchemist* is a spiritual metaphor, an extended parable about searching for our true heart's desire, the gold that lies buried within our own souls. *The Alchemist* is a beautiful and extraordinarily optimistic tale. It is a strong story related to the reader by the omniscient narrator, told in a way reminiscent of fairy tales or spiritual texts. Dreams, symbols, signs, and adventure follow the reader like echoes of ancient wise voices in *The Alchemist*. Fairytales enables us to distinguish between two sides of life, good and evil. There is clear polarization of good and bad, virtuous and vile, beauty and ugliness, industrious and lazy. The readers can easily distinguish them and decide

who they want to be like. It shows that crime is never paid and virtue is rewarded and wins out in end.

In the end Santiago does seem to teach the readers, that life is in the journey and not in the destination. *The Alchemist* is a fable about a shepherd boy named Santiago from the Andalusia area of Southern Spain. It is the story of his courage to follow his dream, the twists and turns he has to face in the course of his pursuit. The magical story of Santiago who grows throughout the story and in the end, even though he was tested severely, he preserved and obtained his treasure by following his dream. Santiago is a simple boy who lives by traveling with his sheep, is suddenly enchanted by a dream he dreamt while resting under a tree, inside a ruined church. He dreamt that if he travels to the pyramids, he will find his fortune.

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