

REPRESENTATION OF INTERFAITH DIALOGUE AS SEEN IN PAULO

COELHO'S *THE ALCHEMIST*

A GRADUATING PAPER

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement for Gaining the Bachelor

Degree in English Literature



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A FINAL PROJECT STATEMENT

I certify that this graduate paper is definitely my own work. I am completely responsible for the content of this graduating paper. Other researcher's opinion or finding included in this research is quoted or cited in accordance with ethical standards.

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COELHO'S *THE ALCHEMIST***

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Atas perhatiannya, saya ucapkan terima kasih

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MOTTO

But strange and unpredictable indeed are the thoughts and emotional excesses to which such individuals are sometimes prone.

And again it is written; “suffer with joy the dishonour that befalleth thee, and be not confounded, and bear no hatred against him who dishonoureth thee.” And we shall do likewise.

(Brothers of Karamazov)



DEDICATION

To my parents and the big family

To those I call friends and in need for consolation and confessions

To those in incessant search for answers and firm grounds

And, to *Mother Nature!*



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This paper is in some sense hardly the work of just one man, however it would be beyond my capacity and words to mention everyone in this passage and I have not the slightest intention to exclude many others who may have also played a part during the production of this paper. Should the content of this paper be of value to those in concern and in the pursuit of knowledge, I hope you find that their support, mentioned or otherwise, means so much to me as the writer.

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REPRESENTATION OF INTERFAITH DIALOGUE AS SEEN IN PAULO COELHO'S *THE ALCHEMIST*

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ABSTRACT

Conflicts between religions may become the source for religious otherness, an ill relationship of certain followers of religion in the presence of the other distinct religion. Religious intolerance and hatred also come as the result of this relationship between religions throughout history. *The Alchemist*, a work by a Brazilian Author named Paulo Coelho, addresses this issue by using its main character, Santiago, to illustrate or represent this all-increasing gap lying in between the people of Moslem Moors and Christianity amidst his journey to find treasure in Egypt. A transformative idea however, can be examined from the perspective of Santiago, a Christian, in regards to his prejudice and hatred towards the Muslims in the Iberian Peninsula. Interfaith Dialogue is the encountering in which people with different faith can express openly and reciprocally their faiths towards mutual understanding. In order to address this issue, the writer applies the theory of Intentional Representation by Stuart Hall. Also, this research is a qualitative research, and the collected data is in the forms of narration and dialogues. From the analysis, the writer found out that the process of transformation in the way Santiago represents the Muslims from harbouring prejudice and ill representations to a more tolerant and understanding perspective represents the idea of Interfaith Dialogue. It could be argued that Santiago's tolerance and understanding of the Muslims stem from not only his frequent encounters with them but also his willingness to overcome his fear, to exchange ideas, and to listen to the experience of the Muslims in practicing their faith, as mediated through dialogues with those standing on the "other" side.

Key words : *The Alchemist, Intentional Representation, Interfaith Dialogue, Encountering.*

REPRESENTASI DIALOG ANTAR KEPERCAYAAN DI DALAM *THE ALCHEMIST* KARYA PAULO COELHO

Oleh: Urida Rahman Latif

ABSTRAK

Konflik antar agama dapat menjadi sebuah alasan munculnya *religious otherness*, sebuah hubungan yang renggang antara suatu pengikut agama ketika berada di lingkungan sekitar agama yang lainnya. Intoleransi agama juga muncul oleh adanya hubungan tersebut di sepanjang sejarah agama-agama. *The Alchemist*, sebuah karya oleh penulis Brazil bernama Paulo Coelho, turut memberikan perhatian terhadap isu ini melalui pandangan karakter utama di dalamnya, Santiago, untuk merepresentasikan hubungan yang semakin merenggang ini diantara kaum Muslim Moors dengan kaum Kristiani di sepanjang perjalanannya untuk mencari harta karun di Mesir. Namun, sebuah ide transformatif dapat ditemukan dalam perspektif Santiago, seorang pemeluk Kristen, yang memunculkan prasangka buruk juga kebencian terhadap kaum Muslim di Semenanjung Iberia. Dialog antar Kepercayaan merujuk pada pertemuan dimana pemeluk sebuah kepercayaan dapat berekspresi secara terbuka dan dua arah menuju kesepahaman. Guna membahas isu tersebut, si Penulis menggunakan teori Intentional Representation oleh Stuart Hall. Juga, penelitian ini adalah penelitian kualitatif, dan data yang diperoleh berupa narasi dan dialog. Dari analisis, Penulis menemukan bahwa proses perubahan Santiago yang mulanya mengadopsi prasangka dan pikiran yang buruk menjadi sikap toleran dan saling paham terhadap kaum Muslim merepresentasikan sebuah fenomena Dialog antar Kepercayaan. Dapat dibuktikan bahwa sikap toleransi dan saling paham Santiago ini diakibatkan tidak hanya dari seringnya ia bertemu dengan mereka, tetapi juga oleh kerelaannya untuk menghadapi ketakutannya, bertukar ide, dan mendengarkan pengalaman orang Muslim dalam praktik kepercayaan mereka, yang kesemuanya diperantarai melalui dialog dengan mereka yang dianggap masuk ke dalam “golongan lain”.

Kata kunci: *The Alchemist*, *Intentional Representation*, *Dialog antar Kepercayaan*, *Pertemuan*.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

But all this happened for one basic reason: no matter how many detours and adjustments it made, the caravan moved toward the same compass point. Once obstacles were overcome, it returned to its course, sighting on a star that indicated the location of the oasis (**the Alchemist, 75**).

But that disaster taught me to understand the word of Allah: people need not fear the unknown if they are capable of achieving what they need and want (**the Alchemist, 76**).

“We are afraid of losing what we have, whether it’s our life or our possessions and property. But this fear evaporates when we understand that our life stories and the history of the world were written by the same hand” (**the Alchemist, 76**).

From the above passages in *the Alchemist* by Paulo Coelho, the main character, who is of Christian believer, gets to have a dialogue with a camel driver, who is a Moslem. Despite their differences to which God they worship and their means of expressing their devoutness to God, these passages, of metaphoric sense, seem to convey a singular idea, of mutual understanding and of common goal, shared between the main character and the camel driver, that is a sense of certainty to what their earthly life mean and to where all their journey would come to a conclusion.

These instances bring out a possible idea, and of a noble kind -worthy to be pursued, of the need and its urgency to look for and look at this single point to which all Christians and Muslims set each of their trajectories, a point in which all would come to an eternal union and unison with God, who in these passages are referred to as the Star and the Writer of men's History, residing in a remote place, away from all the hubris of earthly life, symbolically called as an Oasis, a gathering place of divine peace and providence and warm welcoming.

A believer of religions places God, that in this case God understood in monotheism, as the highest ruler of all creatures and objects and orders that exist. This religious faith that God regarded as the One to whom all returns and as the grand designer of all things promotes a kind of perspective of God being the sole creator of His creations, or a relationship of the creator and the creatures (Ferrer & Sherman, 2008, p. 246). Religions, in consequence of this centralistic perspective, set upon its followers certain symbols, practices, and ceremonies so that they can deepen their connection with their God. What must one say during a prayer and do in religious ceremonies become a matter of utmost importance to the believers of religions. In this respect, one religion may differ, or tends to vary, in terms of how they teach their followers to express their faith. It is also not uncommon to see how one religion announces their religious practice as the correct way amongst the other religious practices. If taken to the extreme, those who do not share and perform their religious practice are taken as blasphemers or infidels, and should therefore be treated as if deserving a punishment from God. The struggle for the reclamation of a single and true way of God then plagues the world throughout history of men and

religions. In consequence, a common conception of a religious belief to be no longer about tolerance and peace but of intolerance and violence in the name of God is widely assumed.

In history, two of the most ancient religions in the world are the Christians and Muslims, producing in consequence of their contact with one another an increased interfaith encounter as the world becomes more global. They are both religions which [...] “shared faith in a free Creator” (Burrell, 2004, p. 197), that is God who is Unseen or Mystical, grand, and mighty. Their relationship is quite complex and struggling for though they are brothers of the same origin, that is the Middle East by the name of Abraham or Ibrahim, yet history claimed that they were always fighting against one another, in small or bigger scale of conflicts, producing a long and perilous history between them. An instance of their significant religious conflict throughout the history of mankind is the Holy War between the Christian Church¹ against the Muslims from which the dominion over the holy lands would then be decided, once and for all. The struggle between brothers of faith competing for their parent’s legacy may seem like an inappropriate metaphor to describe their battle of faith, but then again, this conflict had escalated and lasted for a long time and with such magnitude that its memories and stories and terrible damage cannot be so easily washed away. It reminds ourselves of the bitter reality and mostly the

¹ The use of the term Christian Church follows Sancho I Ramirez’s, King of Aragon and Navarre, aspirations before the First Crusade, in which he said, “for the recovery and extension of the Church of Christ, for the destruction of the pagans, the enemies of Christ, and the building up and benefit of the Christians, so that the kingdom, invaded and captured by the Ishmaelites, might be liberated to the honor and service of Christ_”. It refers to all followers of Christ in general, as issued by the Church authorities. See (O’Callaghan, 2003, p. 8) for further reading.

common postulation that religion does not promote peace and tolerance, but religious fanaticism, barbarism, and intolerance, planting within the hearts of people to this day an everlasting and depressingly reasonable doubt towards religion.

Amidst this seemingly reasonable doubt pertaining to religions, a new breakthrough was introduced, namely the Interfaith Dialogue (IFD). This concept gained its initial attention and interest after the attacks on September 11, 2001 on the United States of America, discussing at international political level the dualities: “Us” versus “Them” or “Christianity” versus “Islam” (Abu-Nimer, Khoury, & Welty, 2007, p. 1). Interfaith dialogue and peace emphasized that these religious conflicts and violence escalate and last, as depicted by history, partly because of ignorance and the lack of constructive interaction with the other “side”. In order to resolve the lack of awareness and interaction of these two conflicting groups, an instrument that is used and proposed is in the form of dialogue. Dialogue serves as the foundation for this peacebuilding project for it involves Engagement and Encounter in seeking to know the “other”. By becoming aware of one another, and by accommodating the exchange of information between the two sides, the common grounds may hopefully not be that far away.

Bringing in much earlier the hope for tolerance and peace, a novel entitled *the Alchemist* by a Brazilian author named Paulo Coelho provides an interesting perspective in regards to this devastating conflict of the people with different faiths. This novel proposed the idea of mutual respect which was published in 1988, years before the 9/11 attack. It was Coelho’s best-selling story amongst many of his works

for reaching more than 80 million copies being sold worldwide, and receiving the attention of international readers through its translation into 56 different languages (Coelho, n.d.). A novel may prove to be a powerful instrument to gain closer connection to more people worldwide, which in this case is readers all around the globe with varying backgrounds. According to Smiley, the commonness which can be found in novels, as is also in *the Alchemist*, enables the readers to become relaxed and open to the story as if they are with another person (Smiley, 2006, p. 19). This sense of commonality is an effect of language being used in that the characters, emotions, and their thoughts are represented through the application of language in the form of plot, settings, dialogues, themes, and characters. Thus, the idea that there is a universal space in which people can relate to a fictional character, sympathize, and understand the emotions and thoughts moulded and delivered by an author makes a novel a powerful instrument to evoke a kind of engagement or connection between the readers and the world of fiction. *The Alchemist* can then bring contribution to address the issue of the lack of peacebuilding interactions between individuals who uphold the religious faith of Islam and Christianity by providing a bridge, that is out of fiction, through the transformation on Santiago's behalf in the story. It can also be implied of the author's, Paulo Coelho, intention to represent this noble idea of encountering and having dialogues with people and traditions unknown to Santiago to become the transformative element in moulding him into a much tolerant and open character.

The Alchemist reveals the tensions of the two conflicting religions, that is the Christian Church and the Muslim Moors, from the point of view of an Andalusian

shepherd named Santiago, who was a Christian believer, in the Iberian Peninsula in search for a hidden treasure near the Pyramids of Egypt. The signs of the holy war still existing and pervading the common life of the people in the Iberian Peninsula are presented in the story, bringing in the depiction of religious otherness². Santiago was depicted of having several encounters with people as well as communities whose practices fell into the category of those called as the infidels, from the perspective of his religious faith. In one of his encounters, Santiago happened to meet a merchant's daughter whose physical traits of her reveal to him that she was of Moorish descent. The memory of the holy war between Christianity and Muslims in Spain greatly influences his perception and treatment of the girl. Several representations pertaining to Moorish people came up to his mind such as the depiction of her eyes which he claimed to remind him of the Moorish Conquerors and the mysteriousness of the Moorish people who came from the land of the unknown, the desert. All of which gave him the sense of fear and distrust during their encounter, and he was much prone to draw himself back from answering her questions which addressed his dilemma to find the hidden treasure in Egypt.

Similar responses are commonplace in the first half of the story, in which Santiago exhibited the expression of fear and distrust in the presence of individuals who practice different faiths during their dialogues. Religious otherness can then be said to represent the interactions of the Christian, represented by Santiago, and the Muslims. A transformation however, began to take place in the second half of the

² Responses of individuals and faith communities in the presence of religious others (Keaten & Soukup, 2009, pp. 174-175)

story, in which Santiago finally decided to travel and find the treasure near the Pyramids of Egypt. In the process of his journey, Santiago could not help but to expose himself to the people and tradition of the Muslims beginning in Tangier, a port town on the Eastern coast of Africa. Santiago's encounters with several characters who perform the practices of Islamic faith become more recurrent and almost inevitable as he progresses incrementally towards his treasure in Egypt. This journey then accommodates his process and desire to learn about the world as well as his own potential. It therefore seems probable to postulate that despite all the differences in the practice of Islamic and Christian faiths in the Iberian Peninsula, which may potentially become the source of their conflict and doubt towards religions in general, the sense of commonality and understanding can be drawn from the encounters of Santiago and the Muslims.

By focusing on how Santiago responds and engages in a dialogue with individuals who perform the practices of different faith traditions, particularly of Islamic tradition, this research takes into consideration the theory of Interfaith dialogues. Two communication scholars, who coined a model of Pluralistic Interfaith Dialogue, named Keaten and Soukup, asserted that Interfaith dialogue puts more emphasis and concentration to personal experience to avoid making a claim of superiority of one religious expression against the other (Keaten & Soukup, 2009, p. 180). It means that our perception, our own experience, and our own responds to those who practice different faiths that matter, instead of being mired in the differences of the two groups and making claims of superiority against the other. The writer argues that Santiago's willingness to expose himself to mysteries,

to change his preconceptions, and to experience spiritual practices of other traditions accommodate his desire to get to know of the Muslim individuals and their traditions which are initially strange and scary to him, which lead to the idea of interfaith dialogue. Niklas also called that this development from the phase of fear and strangeness towards an openness and understanding to the practices of the Muslims happened “through [Santiago’s] personal spirituality” (Bertelsen, 2017, p. 4). Spirituality primarily concerns with the personal connection of an individual to God, other people, and the surrounding nature (Chitra and Judith, 2019 p.108). Anselm also suggested that to believe, or pose an attitude that shows willingness to open one’s mind against the implicits, allows greater knowledge and understanding to be revealed to an individual, hence the connectedness with the elements beyond reason (Rubinoff, 1968, p. 103).

It should be noted however, that this research does not aim to bring out the idea of Interfaith Dialogue as the sole or even the true meaning representative of Coelho’s *the Alchemist*, since in doing so would make the other possible meanings become excluded or negated. Stuart Hall, in turn, suggested in his book entitled *Representation: Cultural Representation and Signifying Practices* that we should think of meaning more in terms of effective exchange or a process of translation between the giver and the taker, and think less in terms of “accuracy” and “truth” (Hall, 1997, pp. 10-11).

1.2 Problem Statements

From the background of the research above, the writer thus comes to a formulation of a research question as stated below;

1. How is Interfaith Dialogue represented in *the Alchemist*?

1.3 Objectives of Study

This research aims to investigate:

How interfaith dialogue is represented through the perspective of Santiago in *the Alchemist*.

1.4 Significances of Study

The significance of this study is primarily to examine within the scope of Intentional Representation Theory the literary work called *the Alchemist* by Paulo Coelho. The writer intends to explore and examine the evidences of interfaith dialogue being portrayed in *the Alchemist*. The writer also, by bringing up this topic, tries to argue that the communion and coexistence of people with differing faiths can be found and most importantly be represented within a work of fiction. Furthermore, in the making of this research, the writer aims to put the knowledge as a result of his study in the English Department into practice as well as to give contribution to the Department, and to whom this may concern, for further studies.

1.5 Literature Review

In order to justify the integrity of this research and to bring about more discoveries pertaining to *the Alchemist* in particular, the researcher mentions several articles in relation to the object. The most common topics which have been

discussed by other researchers are about transformation and dream, while there are also several others managing around the topic of spirituality and religion.

Firstly, a journal article by Sri Wahyuni entitled the Archetypes of Hero's Journey in Paulo Coelho's *the Alchemist*, with which the writer shares the same object, that is *the Alchemist*. This journal article was published in 2016 bringing up the topic of Santiago's character development through trials and adventure. This journal centers around the archetypes (recurring theme) of hero's journey and analyzes it using Christopher Vogler's theory of mythic structure. The conclusion of this research was that the researcher was able to present a road-map depicting 12 stages of hero's journey in the novel.

Secondly, a paper written by Ari Dianto, graduated from Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University of Yogyakarta, in 2016 entitled Dream Chaser; the Explanation of Santiago's Journey in *the Alchemist* focusing on how the Journey of Santiago fit into Joseph Campbell's monomyth theory. The paper begins with the attempt to centralize the analysis of Santiago's journey into that of the journey of the archetypal Hero in which the writer described as the chief character in a plot. He then divided Santiago's journey into several stages in order to match them according to the monomyth theory, and found out that the plot does not follow the precise stages of Hero's journey. He concluded that there is indeed a shift in today's plot.

Thirdly, a graduating paper of Nurul Khasanah from Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University of Yogyakarta, written in 2018, called The Spiritual Identity of

Santiago in Paulo Coelho's *the Alchemist*. She examines the stages of Santiago's journey and tries to analyze the process of spiritual identity transformation from the experiences of Santiago during his journey to Egypt. To discuss this subject, she applies Kiesling et al.'s theory of spiritual identity development which focuses on three spiritual identity phases; foreclosed (close), moratorium (crisis), achieved (attainment). She also takes into consideration to approach the subject through the Islamic perspective. The result of her research was that Santiago's alignment with certain religious activities, established by religious institution, does not deepen his connection with God, or faith, but instead he finds intimation with God from his Journey, outside of the Seminary.

Fourthly, a journal article by Miklas Nuri of Yogyakarta State University entitled; An Existentialism Study on Paulo Coelho's *the Alchemist*. The author conducts this study in order to examine how the main character, Santiago, gets to defend his existence by putting under scrutiny the relationship of his freedom of choice and the idea of Existentialism itself. The writer analyzes the data using Sartre's Existentialism Theory which comprised of freedom of choice, responsibility, anguish, and estrangement. The result of this study was that Santiago, as he is an existentialist individual like any other person, also struggles to determine and maintain his existence through several different states, and they are to wrest and make use of his freedom of choice, overcome of anguish, demonstrate his responsibility of choice, and to estrange himself from others to acquire his sense of uniqueness and existence.

Fifthly, a graduating paper by Novia Rekno Widyastuti, from Muhammadiyah University of Yogyakarta, written in 2017 called the Portrayal of Muslim Community and Culture Reflected in Paulo Coelho's *the Alchemist* (1988). The writer mainly aims to identify and understand the Muslim culture as reflected through the application of symbols to illustrate Muslim society in the story. The writer also tries to understand the reason why Paulo Coelho describes the Muslims as they are in the novel as well. To conduct the analysis, the writer uses Sociological approach. The writer found out from the analysis that the Muslims acts out three types of culture which includes smoking of hookah while having a tea time and exploration conducted by men, the characteristics of ideal Muslims which are the normative characteristics including devoutness, *amarma'ruf*, and *nahimunkar*, and the symbols referring to the Muslims such as prayer, *adzan* (call for prayer), pilgrimage, hijab, Quran, and black dress. The writer also found out that the reasons for such depiction of the Muslims are to give views as well as to connect different religious cultures of a society.

It can be concluded from the above instances of researches that most of them heavily lean towards the individual transformation of Santiago which covers around the topics of Individuation process, Self-existence, and Spiritual transformation. One research in particular by Novia Rekno from Muhammadiyah University of Yogyakarta however, can be taken as the predecessor of the research in attempting to demonstrate the idea of religious tolerance and mutual coexistence. What makes this research of Interfaith Dialogue different from others and Novia's research in particular is that in trying to identify and understand the depiction of the Muslim

culture, Novia heavily emphasizes on the symbols found in the story which he / she claimed to be the portrayal of the Muslims, while this research focuses not only on how the Muslims are represented or portrayed but also the evidences of prejudice and religious conflict between the Christians and the Muslims. Novia, in particular, also hypothesizes that the reason for such depiction of Muslims in the story is to build a bridge between different religious cultures, and, exactly in this area, the writer claims a more forward step than her research and capitalizes it and makes this research to have its own voice, which is to prove how such building of mutual tolerance can be found and aimed in the story.

1.6 Theoretical Approach

Through the lens of the Theory of Representation by Stuart Hall, the conception of the world within the minds of individuals is different to the material world, or the world where objects exist. For instance, what comes to mind- the feeling of joy and the sensation of warmth, of the person who finds himself holding the palm of someone from a different sex, and the reality that there are two physically different individuals, of different kinds in fact, engaging in a close contact with each other, are different. Setting aside the physical event in which two people conjoined with arms interlocking to one another, there can be many different kinds of inferences, conceptions, sensations, or meanings induced by a single event depending on who are involved in the process, which Hall through his book entitled *Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices*, called “a signifying practice- a practice that generates meaning, or that makes things (objects) mean” (Hall, 1997, p. 24). The simple act of holding hands between two people,

which might have been the expression of close relationship between lovers, may represent the act of blasphemy against traditional values of decency within the tribal Muslim community, as depicted in *the Alchemist*. The meaning can thus vary depending on the context.

Stuart Hall believed that Representation involved the process by which members of a culture use language to produce meaning. This system of Representation consists of mental representation which emerges in our minds and the use of language in order to communicate the concepts or abstractions in our minds to other people. Through this terminology, it can then be understood that Representation is the process which connects our mental representations, as the result of the interaction with the world or objects, and the meanings that the person suggests through the use of language. Stuart Hall further explained that there are three approaches which can be used to understand the signifying or representation process, and they are Reflective, Intentional, and Constructionist Representations.

In this research, the writer decided to apply the Intentional approach to the representation of Interfaith Dialogue in *the Alchemist*. Hall pointed out that this approach suggests that it is the speaker, the author, or the creator, which in this case is Paulo Coelho, who imposes or wills his meaning on the story through language (Hall, 1997, p. 25). It means that the words and symbols in *the Alchemist* must mean what Paulo Coelho intends they should mean. Considering that the *Alchemist* was made by Paulo Coelho, it can then be inferred that *the Alchemist* represents his idea or suggestive of his idea about the attempt to understand people of different faiths, or the “other”. It corresponds with the argument by James that the point of

Intentional approach of representation is to indicate that nothing may in an accidental way be a representation (Young, p. 128). Representation therefore if not refers to, then stands for a certain meaning, and in consideration to the idea that a novel is a text, and therefore a collection of symbols, be it author-wise or contextual, the novel must “mean something”.

Intentional approach of representation concerns not only of the meaning, as Hall pointed out, but also the effects and consequences of representation- its politics (Hall, 1997, p. 6). Through this train of thought, a novel is regarded as a mean to say or represent something through the use of certain symbols, characters, plot, and conflicts to the readers, which Hall called a discursive aspect for the meanings projected through the story shape and influence our conduct (Hall, 1997, p. 291). It therefore conceives the author as the source of meaning intending to generate an affective influence to the reader of a certain ideal. Representation of interfaith dialogue is then conducted so that it may reveal the meaning as well as its effects in *the Alchemist* that people regardless of their faiths or religious practices may be able to achieve mutual acknowledgement and tolerance despite all the devastating conflicts.

1.7 Methods of Research

1.7.1 Type of Research

In this paper, the writer uses qualitative method in order to explore the answer to the problems formulated above. According to Creswell, the processes in qualitative research include (1) asking questions and problems, (2) collecting data

related to social and human problems, (3) analyzing the data inductively, and (4) interpreting the meaning of the data in order to gain understanding towards the problems formulated by the researcher (Creswell, 2014, p. 3).

1.7.2 Data Sources

The data sources of this research are divided into two categories: the main source and supporting source. The main source of this paper is *the Alchemist* by Paulo Coelho. The supporting data, on the other hand, are collected from websites in the form of journals, reviews, or articles relevant to the analysis of *the Alchemist* and to the matters around Interfaith Dialogue.

1.7.3 Data Collection Technique

In the data collection techniques, the researcher explores the story of *the Alchemist* in order to address the central issue being discussed, that is Interfaith Dialogue. The writer also collects varying sources in the forms of journals, books, and articles in order to gain deeper understanding to the subject in question. Lastly, to strengthen the validity of the data, the researcher arranges all the references into one division which can be found at the end of this paper for further examination and reading.

1.7.4. Data Analysis Technique

The writer analyses all the compiled data in order to answer the problems using Stuart Hall's Intentional Representation Theory. By utilizing a theory, the researcher can then analyze the data so that the evidence for the representation of

Interfaith Dialogue can be brought to the surface, and the result should hopefully become more focused and comprehensive.

1.8 Paper Organization

This research can be divided into four parts. Part one is introduction where it consists of background of study, research questions, objectives of study, significance of study, prior research, theoretical approach, method of research, and paper organization. Part two includes character and characterization, settings, and plot. Part three is about the discussion and analysis of the novel using the Intentional Representation Theory. The last part is where the conclusion of the discussion and suggestions for the future research are made.



CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

4.1 Conclusion

This chapter marks the end of the stages of discussions pertaining to the representation of Interfaith dialogue as illustrated through the main character, Santiago, in *the Alchemist*. The results of this discussion are divided into two main categories. The first is how the relationship of two faith traditions, that are the Muslims and the Christians, is represented throughout the journey of Santiago in search for his treasure near the Pyramids of Egypt. Through the characterization aspect and its relationship with the setting of the story, the writer discovers several representations of both the Muslims and the Christians in the Iberian Peninsula around 14th Century. The interaction of the people of Spain and the African regions leads to two implications, and they are the *intermingling* of people with different traditions as mediated by travels and caravans, as well as the assumption of religious otherness in the presence of those practicing different faith. The Muslims are represented as the Moorish invaders, as practices of infidels, and as a feared group. Santiago's journey becomes a call for him to get out of his comfort zone and his

mind in order to find out how to develop himself as well as how to mediate his fear and distrust towards the Muslims in particular.

The second category is around the representations of Muslims as seen through the perspective of Santiago during and after his encounters with Muslim individuals and their culture. The whole encounters with the Muslims reveal the idea of Coexistence, Openness to Mysteries, Journey, and Experiencing the Practice of Muslim Faith. The effect of Interfaith dialogue can then be actualized by undertaking a voluntary journey with an open mind towards the practice of Islamic faith. Because of the unique condition in the Iberian Peninsula where the coexistence of Muslims and Christians is possible, Santiago then develops keen perception which aims for mutual tolerance and peace, hence the goal of Interfaith dialogue itself.

4.2 Suggestion

The writer is well aware that this research is far beyond satisfactory and is surely lacking in every aspect imaginable. Any feedback, suggestion, or critique are very well welcomed in order to at least improve the quality of this paper. Content wise, the encounters of the main character who is a Christian with the Muslim individuals greatly piqued the writer's interest in order to reveal the urgency for mutual tolerance between two religions. It only focuses on how the idea of Religious Otherness of the religions is diminished and transformed by undergoing constant exchanges with a certain degree of openness and willingness, that is through Interfaith dialogue. Should this research become of use to the next

researchers, the writer suggests that they may take a closer examination to the allusion of the history of the Holy War in Spain, and expect some, or if there is any, implications and changes of meanings to *the Alchemist*.



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