

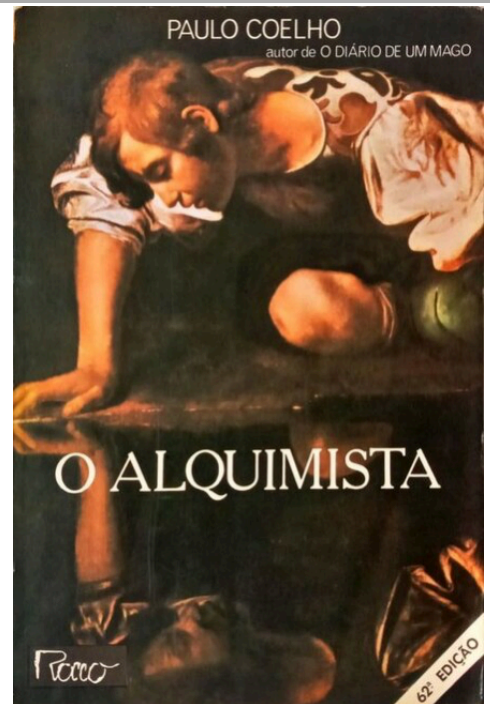


The Alchemist (novel)

Plot

The boy then encounters a wise alchemist, who teaches him to realize his true self. Together, they risk a journey through the territory of warring tribes, where Santiago is forced to

The Alchemist



Original Brazilian publication (publ. Rocco)

Author	<u>Paulo Coelho</u>
Original title	<i>O Alquimista</i>
Illustrator	<u>Paulo Coelho</u>
Cover artist	<u>Caravaggio</u> , <u>Narcissus</u> , 1597–9
Country	Brazil
Language	Portuguese
Genre	<u>Quest</u> , <u>adventure</u> , <u>fantasy</u>
Publisher	<u>HarperTorch</u> (English translation) Originally a novel written in Portuguese

demonstrate his oneness with the "Soul of the World" by turning himself into a dust storm before he is allowed to proceed.



The Pyramids of Giza

When he reaches the pyramids and begins digging, he is robbed by thieves, who ask him what he is digging for; he replies that a dream has led him to buried treasure. The thieves scoff, and the leader remarks about a dream he once had about treasure under a tree at a ruined church.

Santiago realizes the treasure he sought was where he had his original dream all along.

Reception

Coelho wrote *The Alchemist* in only two weeks in 1987. He explained that he was able to write at this pace because the story was "already written in [his] soul."^[3]

The book's main theme is about finding one's destiny, although according to *The New York Times*, *The Alchemist* is "more self-help than literature".^[4] The advice given to Santiago that "when you really want something to happen, the whole universe will conspire so that your wish comes true" is the core of the novel's philosophy and a motif that plays throughout it.^[5]

The Alchemist was first released by Rocco,^[6] an obscure Brazilian publishing house. Despite its having sold "well", the publisher after a year decided to give Coelho back the rights.^[7] Needing to "heal" himself from this setback, Coelho set out to leave Rio de Janeiro with his wife and spent 40 days in the *Mojave Desert*. Returning from the excursion, Coelho decided he had to keep on struggling^[7] and was "so convinced it was a great book that [he] started knocking on doors."^[3]

The plot of the novel builds on the international folktale type classified as no. 1645 ("The Treasure at Home") in the *Aarne–Thompson–Uther Index* of folktales: "A man dreams that if he goes to a distant city he will find treasure on a certain bridge. Finding no treasure, he tells his dream to a man who says that he too has dreamed of treasure at certain place. He describes the place, which is the first man's home. When the latter returns home he finds the treasure."^[8] The

Publication date	1988
Published in English	1993
Media type	Print (hardback, paperback and iTunes), Audiobook (Audible)
Pages	163 pp (first English edition, hardcover), 208 pages (25th Anniversary Edition)
ISBN	0-06-250217-4 (first English edition, hardcover)
OCLC	26857452 (https://www.worldcat.org/oclc/26857452)
Dewey Decimal	869.3
Preceded by	<i>The Pilgrimage</i> (1987)
Followed by	<i>Brida</i> (1990)

earliest known version of this tale type is a poem by the 13th-century Persian poet Rumi, and a variant of the tale appears in the *One Thousand and One Nights* collection of Arabic folktales.^{[9][10]}

Adaptations

In 1994, a comic adaptation was published by Alexandre Jubran.^[11] HarperOne, a HarperCollins imprint, produced an illustrated version of the novel, with paintings by the French artist Moebius, but failed to convince Coelho "to consent to the full graphic-novel treatment".^[12] *The Alchemist: A Graphic Novel* was published in 2010, adapted by Derek Ruiz and with artwork by Daniel Sampere.

The Alchemist's Symphony by the young Walter Taieb was released in 1997 with the support of Paulo Coelho, who wrote an original text for the CD booklet.^[13] The work has eight movements and five interludes.^{[14][15]}

In 2002, a theatrical adaptation of *The Alchemist* was produced and performed in London.^[16] Since then there have been several productions by the Cornish Collective.^[17] A later London performance was visited by the producer Ashvin Gidwani who, finding it "verbose but colourful", decided to commission a new 90-minute version of the book from Deepa Gahlot for the Indian stage.^[18] This was eventually launched in 2009.^[19]

In 2006, Mistaken Identity, a Singapore indie rock band, adapted the story of the novel into what they claimed was "essentially our attempt at writing a musical" and released the track as "The Alchemist".^[20] *Kochavva Paulo Ayyappa Coelho*, an Indian Malayalam-language film written and directed by Sidhartha Siva, has its title inspired by novelist Paulo Coelho, and a central theme is inspired from *The Alchemist*.^{[21][22]}

In 2023, Legendary Entertainment became the latest in a line of outfits since 2016 to acquire the film rights to the novel, in this case with Jack Thorne attached as a writer.^[23]

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External links

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