

Coelho's Select Texts: A Psychobiographical Analysis

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Abstract

To investigate Paulo Coelho's intuitive processes throughout his life, this case study of psychobiography looks at him as a singular entity. Dilthey's framework for contemporary hermeneutics provides the theoretical backdrop for the study's single-case-study methodology. Based on a content analysis of texts written from both the first- and third-person perspectives, Paulo Coelho was selected as a study topic. It has been determined that Paulo Coelho, one of the most well-known and widely-read modern writers, relies heavily on his intuitions as a source of deeper direction in many areas of his life, including decision-making and personal growth. His personal story, including examples from his canon of creative works, illustrates his penchant for making decisions on the fly.

Keywords – Intuitive processes, Hermeneutics, Psychobiography, Single-case-study methodology.

1. Introduction

Psychobiography refers to the study of famous people, such as artists or politicians, as seen through the lens of psychological study and theory. Psychobiography, which is based on personality psychology and real occurrences, is often seen as a precursor to therapeutic case studies. Within the field of biography, the study of the mind (psychobiography) is on the rise.

1.1 Background

The lives of historical personalities are examined through the lens of psychological theory and research in the field of psychobiography, which is a subfield of history. By combining psychological theories with the information that is already available about well-known personalities' lives and the choices that they made, the objective is to get a fresh understanding of such individuals. Many famous people have been the subject of

psychobiographies, including Adolf Hitler, Vincent van Gogh, William Shakespeare, Martin Luther King Jr., Abraham Lincoln, and Saddam Hussein. Whereas a conventional biography may try to cover every aspect of its subject's life, a psychobiography will zero in on key moments and provide an interpretation of their relevance. Not only has this field's potential aided our understanding of historical figures' lives, but it has also supplied direction and insight into the field of psychology (Runyan, 2019).

1.2 Rationale

Paulo Coelho, a man of extraordinary resilience who overcame great suffering to become complete and committed, is the subject of this inspiring biography. The authors of this research attribute a great deal of this expansion to the use of one's intuition and the making of sound, proactive decisions. Although Paulo

Coelho and his writings have been the subject of many studies, this paper was unable to locate any psychobiographical works that address the author's intuitive methods or the part that intuition played in his choice-making processes (Anderson and Dunlop, 2019).

1.3 Aim and Objective

This research aims at evaluating the Coelho's select Texts from a psychobiographical perspective.

Objectives

- To identify the main concept of Coelho's, selected Texts
- To analyse the life of Paulo Coelho
- To evaluate the intuitional factor behind Coelho's, selected Texts

1.4 Research Significance

Intuition and healthy, proactive decision-making are put up as key factors in this article's view of how people mature and grow. Despite the fact that both Paulo Coelho and his works have been the subject of intensive research, no psychobiographical study has been identified that addresses the role of intuition and gut feelings in the author's life or in his writing (Mayer, 2019).

2. Literature Review

2.1 Concept of the topic

Psychologists analyse people's life stories or psychobiographies. The impact of their work has been felt across borders and fields. Psychobiography is "the long-term study of historically noteworthy and extraordinary individuals with the goal of uncovering and reproducing their lives psychologically," according to the definition." Popular culture figures, from politicians to musicians to writers, are the subjects of psychobiographies (Bulut and Usman, 2021). A person serves as the "center of focus" in these probes. Psychobiographies are founded on studies in

both biography and psychology. Many consider Freud's biography of Leonardo da Vinci to be the first of its sort.

Psychobiography has been criticized as elitist, simple, reductionist, and holistic by more established branches of psychology, but its proponents have found success by highlighting its unique ability to provide rich and nuanced insights into individuals' experiences. This Paulo Coelho analysis emphasizes the significance of one's innate psychic faculties. Recent decades have seen an increase in the production of works devoted to the study of the psychological biography of writers. In order to better understand what sets Paulo Coelho apart, this research will analyze his intuitive decision-making and associated processes throughout his whole body of work. In order to, say, encourage self-reflection and general psychobiographical research and the advancement of the principles employed, the book makes extensive use of psychological descriptions of the behavior, triumphs, and shortcomings of this brilliant writer (Kovary, 2019).

2.2 The Life of Paulo Coelho

Paulo Coelho, a Brazilian writer, is the subject of this in-depth biography. Rio de Janeiro, Brazil gave birth to him on August 24, 1947, and his parents were devout Catholics. His father's engineering background gave him a practical outlook on life that he passed on to his son. Since he did not follow in their footsteps and instead chose a profession in literature, Paulo Coelho's parents committed him to a mental hospital three times. As a young man in Brazil, he was imprisoned and tortured, but this did not deter him from his dream of becoming a writer (Mayer and Kovary, 2019). After being released, he enrolled in law school but dropped out to pursue other interests. While on a pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela in Spain at the age of 36, he had a profound change in his outlook on life, which he chronicled in the book *The Journey*. A year later, he wrote *The Alchemist* during a two-week creative surge.

When *The Alchemist* was released, it propelled Paulo Coelho to international acclaim as a writer. He has, on average, published a new book every two years since then. In 2013, his books were published in at least 71 languages and sold over 150 million copies worldwide. He is well known for his autobiographical writing.

2.3 Intuition

In particular, research has examined how several modes of thought—cognition, intuition, and emotion—interact in high-stakes scenarios. Intuition is discussed in terms of how it contributes to the development of one's own and other people's cognitive knowledge and the underlying systemic processes that shape their behaviors. Studies reveal that the emotional system mediates between cognition and behavior in decision-making, underscoring the value of intuition. The psychological debate on decision-making now includes debates about the function of intuition and intuitive decision-making in making significant, life-altering decisions (Naseem et al. 2022).

Researchers have long distinguished between rational and irrational ways of making decisions. The academic field has made significant strides in understanding the dynamic between cognitive (logical) and emotional (instinctive) decision-making processes since the 1990s. In the 1990s, Duffy focused attention on the topic of "how people generate meaning out of their experience in the world," and many of these discourses use notions about "sense-making" to do so (1995). The discussion and argument around intuitive decision-making and other types of sense-making have provided the foundation for a number of the ideas and frameworks people use to make sense of the world today, including system theories (Mayer and van Niekerk, 2020). Instead of relying solely on a reductionist and linear understanding of logic, intuition might be better suited to accomplishing its goal of producing systemic perceptions and grounding decision-making on a more holistic level by integrating rationality,

emotion, conscious suggestions, and unconscious knowledge.

An individual's intuitive responses to the possible implications of a value decision are hardwired into their biology. Information of this kind appears as thoughts, feelings, and body sensations in the context of a more complex way of seeing and experiencing. Information about the external environment may be gained via the automatic mental process known as intuition. The term "instinctive reflexes, initial impressions, and personal preferences" describe this way of thinking. However, another meaning of intuition is "acts of recognition." The ability to create something that is understandable, manageable, and significant is, thus, acknowledged as a fundamental skill (Juneja et al. 2020).

2.4 Intuition as Knowledge System for Decision-Making

Many scientists now think that decision-making is supported by a complicated intrapersonal knowledge system that includes reasoning, intuition, and emotion, all of which interact in complex ways. Decision-making in the real world has been studied extensively, and it has been shown that people use a variety of conscious and unconscious tools. Deductive and logical thinking as well as statistical and probability analysis are of little utility or relevance for some types of judgments, such as those requiring long procedures. Making decisions in the real world requires a realistic approach and an in-depth familiarity with all essential aspects, such as gut feelings, cognitive stimulation, metaphorical comprehension, narrative context, and emotional state. Therefore, there is a mutually beneficial connection between intuition and information; intuitive decision-making is founded on a qualitative and pragmatic evaluation of the natural environment. It is based on a close examination of the world as it really is. Every encounter and intuitive decision-making process enhances this comprehensive view. Using holistic experiences and perceptions,

intuition may be used to make good judgments even in unusual circumstances. Subjective sensations may not indicate exact decision-making. Three complicated factors—situation judgment, past experiences, and "gut feeling"—form an intuitive synthesis. Intuition incorporates cognition and emotion. However, intense emotions toward an event or scenario may interfere with intuitive functioning and observation, as well as the transmission of vital intuitive information into awareness and conscious intuitive judgments (Mayer et al. 2019).

Decisions made in System 1 processes may seem to be mechanical, non-voluntary, and easy, which has contributed to the rise in popularity of the 'dual model' of decision-making over the last decade. System 2 processes include those that need thoughtful deliberation and analysis, such as self-analysis and the solution of complex mathematical problems. The first set of interacting knowledge systems is made up of intuitive expertise (synonymous with "know") and the second set is made up of sensory perception (synonymous with "feel") (intuition-as-feeling). There are two primary modes of thought: System 1 (which is fast, automatic, frequent, stereotypical, subconscious, and emotive) and System 2 (which is slow, deliberate, analytical, and rational) (slow, deliberative, effortful, infrequent, calculating, conscious and logical). The combination of these two types of knowledge combines the logical with the intuitive to improve one's viewpoint, interpretation, and decision-making (Mayer et al. 2021).

2.5 Literature Gap

The psychological study of Paulo Coelho's life story, as well as the quantitative studies on intuition and intuitive decision-making over a lifetime, are both in short supply. On the other hand, it is hypothesized that research into the human lifespan would shed light on hitherto hidden features of intuitive decision-making and its use over the lifespan. The life of the

research subject will be dissected and pieced back together via an analysis of their unconscious, cognitive, and intuitive choices. This research provides fresh details on Paulo Coelho's existence, health, religion, and achievements.

3. Psychobiographical research: A Holistic method

This study involves psychobiographical research. It uses Dilthey's contemporary hermeneutics to study a particular individual. Intuition is examined throughout the writer's life using a holistic method. The researcher's self-reflective technique of exploring and interpreting Paulo Coelho's life narrative creates "Verstehen" (understanding). Because it offers a grounded understanding of ideas, goals, and other mental states, Dilthey's viewpoint is appropriate for this inquiry. He became interested in hermeneutics because he wanted to use it as a tool for self-reflection. His groundbreaking work in the Humanities was selected due to its focus on the uniqueness and completeness of the human being while yet paying homage to the analyzing and describing traditions of Psychology.

Intentionally sought out information on Paulo Coelho. Deliberate sampling, based on a number of sampling criteria including expert knowledge of the research issue, was conducted due to the author's interest in the writer's life and works, the importance of intuition in the writer's creative works and life, and Paulo Coelho's status as an exceptional author.

First- and third-person documents provided data. The study included Coelho's history, one interview, and two case studies on chosen creative works, as well as autobiographical narratives and selected literary works. This psychobiographical study values research ethics highly since the individual is alive (Ponterotto and Reynolds, 2019).

4. Discussion

This analysis of Paulo Coelho's autobiography demonstrates that the author's innate urge to become a writer was already indicated by the time he was eight years old, not during his teenage years as was previously emphasized. This is shown by the fact that the author's innate urge to become a writer was already indicated by the time he was eight years old. These details

were taken directly from the author's memoirs. It's probable that the intuitive foundation that Paulo Coelho established when he was a youngster was a big impact on his subsequent success. This is something that may be speculated about. Some people believe that the strong urge to read that Paulo Coelho had when he was a youngster was an early indicator that he intended to work in the publishing field when he grew up (van Reenen, 2022).

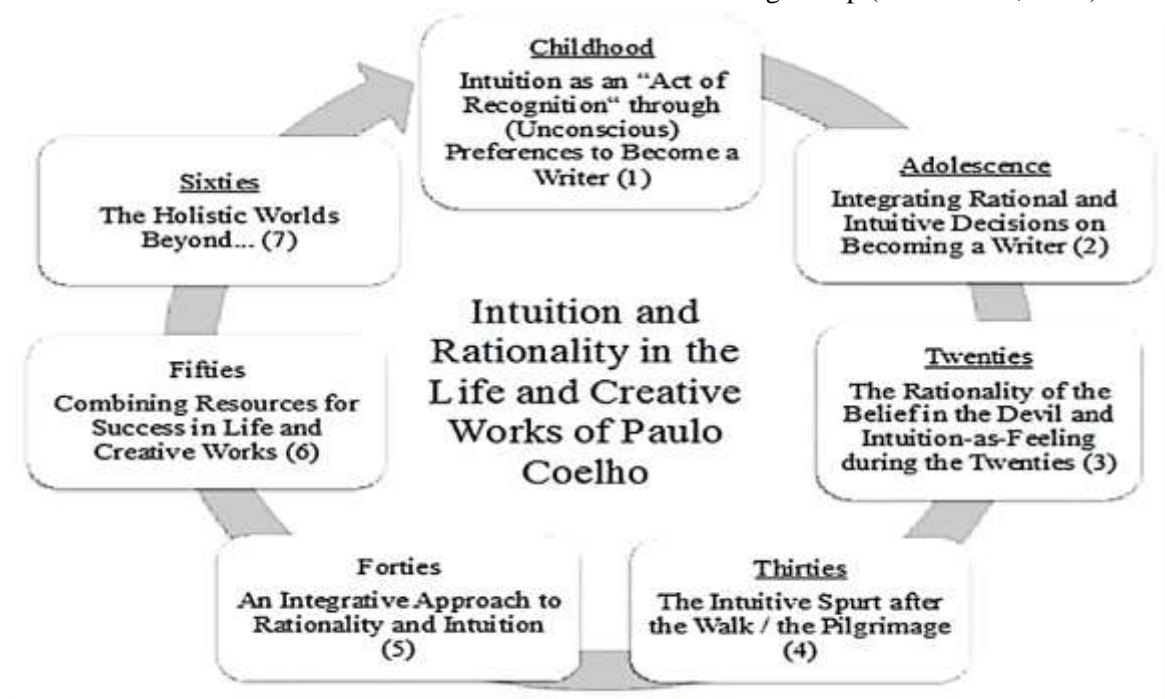


Figure 1: Intuition and rationality across the lifespan

(Source: Mayer and Maree, 2017)

Throughout his adolescent years, Coelho makes a concerted effort to purposefully come to grips with his *idée fixe* to become a writer. During this time, he makes the most of the chance to hone his writing skills and get experience in various artistic and theatrical endeavors as well as literary competitions (Mayer et al. 2021).

Over the course of the following ten years, in order for Coelho to realize his dream of being a well-known and famous author, he would willingly enter into a bargain with the devil and Satanism. Because he had agreed to this deal, he would become completely cut off from his innate intelligence. But he had a change of heart

and chose to go back to the Christian church that he had been reared in after going through an odd and horrific initiation into a Satanist organization.

After completing the journey to Santiago and becoming a member of RAM, Paulo Coelho experiences a surge of creativity, which he utilizes to communicate to the reader his innate grasp of ability and feeling (VALÍZADEH and VAZÍFEHKHAH, 2021). Not only does Paulo Coelho begin to incorporate a more holistic approach to logic and intuition into his life when he is in his forties, but he also begins to include this perspective in his writing and storytelling at this time. This is when he reaches the point in his life where he is able to write and

tell his stories. In an attempt to find inner peace, monetary success, and public fame for himself all at the same time, Coelho starts to study the spirituality of his own free will, which he then shares with the world.

In the 1950s, Paulo Coelho continues his exploration into the merging of intuitive and intellectual thinking by infusing a variety of values into both his life and the creative works that he produces. He also describes the challenges he faces in determining what his true route entails, such as whether it is the one that is opened to him by his logic or if it is the one that is provided to him by his intuition. These two pursuits are both carried out throughout the decade in question (Suwasono et al. 2019).

The creative work that Paulo Coelho produced in 2011 and titled *Aleph* is the only one in which he is able to effectively blend intellectual and intuitive ideas and choices within his story. The primary focus of this particular work is on the author's personal faith as well as the search for meaning in one's life. The results of this research have a variety of repercussions, both theoretical and practical, that may be drawn from it. One of these repercussions is that there is a pressing need for further in-depth study of intuition as well as the integration of intuitive and rational cognition (Suwasono et al. 2019). It is possible that the psychobiography of a person will shed light on the ways in which intuitive decision-making changes and develops throughout one's life, as well as the ways in which System 1 and System 2 processes can be methodically explored and integrated to produce choices that are more well-rounded and purposeful at all stages of life. This goal will be reached by shedding light on the ways in which intuitive decision-making alters and develops during the course of a person's life.

This psychobiographical research into the life of a single person should, if all goes according to plan, reveal some new understandings about the development and expression of intuition as well as intuitive decision-making throughout the course of time. It presents novel insights on the harmony between System 1 and System 2

decision-making processes and has the potential to increase readers' respect for intuition as well as their appreciation for the value of self-reflective, introspective research into the nature of their own intuitive and reasoning capabilities (Lestari and Thoyib, 2019).

5. Conclusion

The objective of this study was to examine and make sense of the part that Paulo Coelho's intuition played in his life and the work that he produced. To examine Paulo Coelho's life and creative works through the lens of intuition and intuitive decision-making, the author reconstructed Paulo's life story from a psychobiographical perspective. According to the research, Paulo Coelho's journey through France and Spain to Santiago de Compostela in 1987 and his epiphany of the "Call to become a writer" in the Dachau concentration camp in Germany did not signal the beginning of his career as a renowned and worldwide recognized author. Instead, the journey through France and Spain marked the beginning of Paulo Coelho's career as a successful and widely recognized author, as shown by the study. Instead, it all started when eight-year-old Paulo Coelho preferred reading to doing his education. The source of this prejudice was an "act of reading," in his words.

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