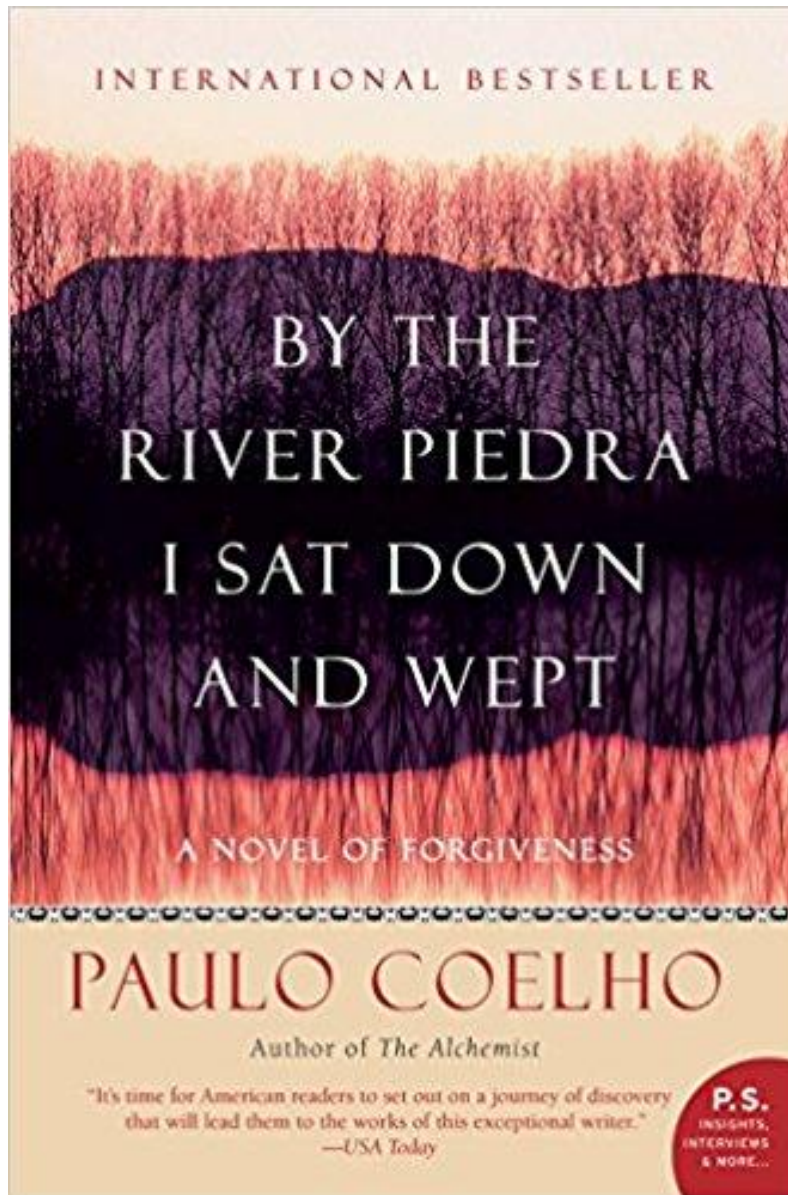


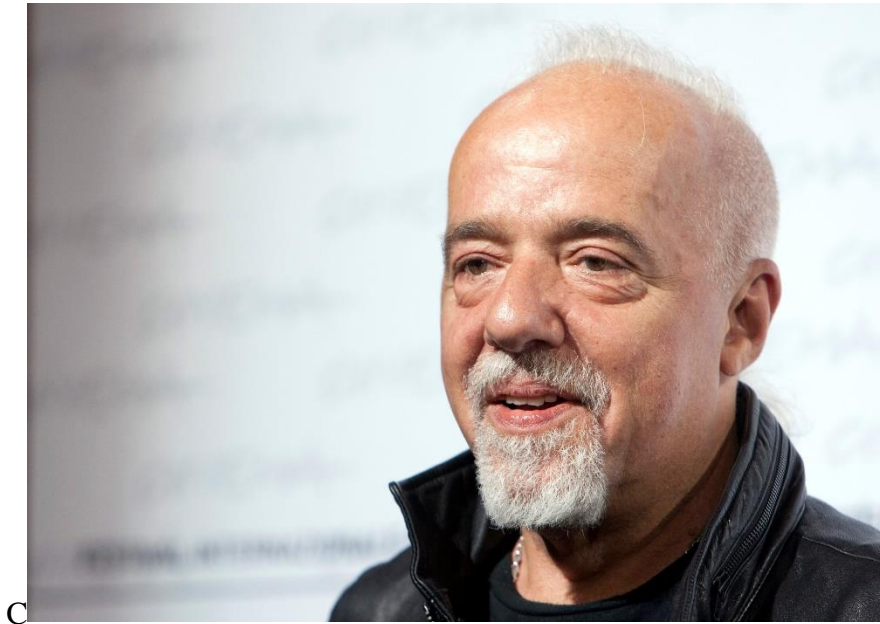
**Concept of the ‘Other’ in Woman in Paulo Coelho’s  
*By The River Piedra, I Sat Down and Wept*  
S. Yasmeenbanu**

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Courtesy: <https://www.amazon.com/River-Piedra-Sat-Down-Wept/dp/0061122092>

## Abstract



Courtesy: <http://www.newszii.com/paulo-coelho-quotes/>

*By The River Piedra, I Sat Down and Wept* is a novel by Paulo Coelho, which tells a love story of ideal lovers. Pilar is a heroine in the novel who struggles to come out of herself. The feeling of ‘Other’ with her own self is a major conflict present in the novel. This paper finds out the ideal relationship between man and woman in the novel with the help of eliminating the ‘Other’ from oneself; Men and women are not different they are the part in each other is the finding. The author breaks the narrow male chauvinistic social view and presents beautiful characters through this novel. The Lacanian ideas of psychoanalytical theory backs up the paper.

**Keywords:** Paulo Coelho, *By The River Piedra, I Sat Down and Wept*, Psychoanalytical, Other, feminist,

## Introduction

*By The River Piedra, I Sat Down and Wept* is a novel by Paulo Coelho tells a love story of ideal lovers. The novel begins as Pilar the protagonist of the novel writes her story at bank of the river Piedra, she recounts her youth love and the happenings in one week. The novel opens with Pilar’s excitement in meeting her childhood lover after a long time. *The novel opens with a lament of Pilar longing for her beloved childhood lover.* However, their love resumed through letters and she decided to go and attend the conference in which her lover gives a lecture. The novel ends with the reunion of the lovers after facing a lot of inner conflicts and hardships. The whole novel is a revelation of the closed self of both the protagonist and her lover. Pilar is a heroine of the novel who struggles to come out of her own self and accept the love of her lover.

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## Focus of This Paper

The feeling of 'Other' in herself is a major conflict present in the novel. This paper traces out how Pilar comes out the 'Other' in herself and make an ideal relationship between her lover and herself in the novel. The author breaks the narrow male chauvinistic social view and presents beautiful male and female characters through his novel. The novel establishes the view that Men and women are not different they are the part of each other, further the author establishes a view that is, his believe in feminine side of God which a new concept to the world of literature.

## Paulo Coelho

Paulo Coelho, a Brazilian contemporary writer, author of 33 books, his books were translated into many languages, he bases his books mostly on spiritual experiences and universal human experiences beyond the religious practices. His characters are realistic in general and his female characters also are unique, self-making and they are 'high females'. His novels have inspired the world readers and his novels are the best sellers of the present time. He has received many awards and inspired numberless minds.

Paulo has broken the stereotypes of male as well as female characters through his characterisation. He has created wide range of characters, his characters are thinking, inspiring, ideal and real like. In the novel *By the River Piedra, I Sat Down and Wep* tone can see the ideal woman and man presented beautifully. Oxford online dictionary defines 'woman', 'A woman who is considered different from previous generations; especially one who challenges or rejects the traditional roles of wife, mother, or homemaker, and advocates independence for women and equality with men'.

## Pilar

Pilar is such an ideal self-fighting woman who advocates and enjoys equality with her lover. The unnamed hero of the novel also is an ideal man who treats and believes that women are equal to men in all possible sense.

Though Pilar loves him, she does not want him to be in a domestic circle, she thinks that he should continue with his preaching service. Her intentions are good, she wants him to serve for the humanity but she could not stop her mind being very critical about men and their relationship. She utters the phrase 'I could have' many times in page number ten, to indicate theregretting inner voice of Pilar. The author presents inner conflict of the characters in the novel while the lovers try to break the mental boundary within and accept the life's giving as it is. Pilar after a long break from her lover meets him and understands his respectful position as a religious preacher.

## The Concept of 'Other'

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He explains to Pilar the concept of ‘Other’ and how he succeeded to over-come the other. The readers can understand that there is an ‘Other’ in the psyche of Pilar which keeps her feel distanced from her lover in the earlier chapters of the novel and later when she realises the presence of Other in her psyche, she decides to get away from it then she accept the love relationship of her lover. The Other in the novel is capitalised, it gives an understanding that the other is a proper noun, treated as a protagonist. The concept of the self requires the existence of the Other to understand the self-better.

### **Concept of Other in Psychology**

In an article written by Sheme Mary P U, who did a psycho analysis of the two female character writes:

Psychoanalytic criticism adopts the methods devised by Freud and later theorists to interpret texts by reading and analyzing. It argues that the mysteries in the literary texts, like dreams, express the secret unconscious desires and anxieties of the author or sometimes of the characters. (Sheme 19)

Sigmund Freud came out with two concepts of self: they are ‘conscious’ and ‘unconscious’. It means there are two selves in any human being and each consider the other as ‘Other.’ Jacques Lacan turned out with an idea of Other with capital ‘O’ and other with littler ‘o’ where the lower-case-o different assigns the Imaginary sense of self and its going with change inner selves. Emmanuel Levinas established the contemporary definitions, usage and applications of the ‘Other’ as the radical counter part of the self.

Lacan regularly utilizes the terms “other” (with a lower-case o) and “Other” (with a capital O). Given an understanding of Lacan's register theory and the mirror stage (see [2.1](#) and [2.2](#) above), these terms can be clarified with relative ease and brevity. The lower-case-o other designates the Imaginary ego and its accompanying alter-egos. By speaking of the ego itself as an “other,” Lacan further underscores its alien and alienating status as spelled out in the immediately preceding sub-section here (see [2.2](#) above). Additionally, when relating to others as alter-egos, one does so on the basis of what one “imagines” about them (often imagining them to be “like me,” to share a set of lowest-common-denominator thoughts, feelings, and inclinations making them comprehensible to me) (Adrian).

### **Unrealised Self of Any Human Being**

The whole novel is an attempt to understand the unrealised self of any human being. Pilar is only a metaphor of all the confused, self-concealed women. “I can read your eyes. I can read your heart. You are going to fall in love and suffer” (Paulo 17). The given quote is said by Brida to Pilar which is an evidence that Pilar could not understand her own self and behaves differently from what she feels. She was actually longing to be with her lover but not ready to do so hence the given narration reveals her deep sense of love for her lover. In one of his preaches he speaks

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about the Other in detail and discusses the importance of eliminating the other from one's mind. The lover, a matured preacher says in the novel "From the moment I ousted the other from my life, the Divine Energy began to perform its miracles" (Paulo 57). Thus, he could identify and subdue the Other in his mind, later she decided to practice the 'exercise of other'.

## Result and Discussion

The author presents a dialogic narrative between the Other and Pilar, in the course of the novel as Pilar realises and decide to outlaw the other from her and says: "I felt that my soul was bathed in the light of god or of a goddess-in whom I had lost faith. And I felt that at that moment, the other left my body and was standing in the corner of that small room." (Paulo 78). When Pilar once do away with the 'Other' she feels relaxed, she could hear her own heart, she feels immensely happy and she realises her love for him. "I got up, banished the other from my thoughts, opened the window again, and let the sun in" (Paulo 81).

There was only one recourse: the other, with whom I had been harsh because I was weak, and cold because I was afraid – but no longer wanted the other. The other appears, in all the problems and complicated situation.

Whenever she has the difference of opinion about men the Other appears and talks critically about her lover. "Men always have their reasons said the other" (Paulo 125). It is clearly understood from the novel, the happenings in the novel reveals that she has no controversies with her lover, rather all the difference of opinions arise from her own psyche. The dual self in a woman is clearly present through this novel. When she stopped to listen to the other, she could hear the music of love in her heart and tear drop rolls down from her eye.

## Conclusion

The given evidences from the text clearly express that the impediments in life are not always from out-side, at times they are from within. One has to come out of his or her own self to explore and enjoy the gifts of life. Pilar and her lover are the metaphors of all the suffering human being who tries to come out of their ego.

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