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**The Manichean Study of Dan Brown's
*Angels and Demons***

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Abstract

The present study is an attempt to discuss the way the conflict and conspiracy in the Manichean religion between the world of Darkness and the world of Light was linked to the conflict of science and the conspiracy of the Roman church under the guise of the Illuminati in *Angels and Demons* by Dan Brown. According to the novel religion was evil and science was good. The aim of this research is to show how Dan Brown used the Manichean world of Good and Evil in describing the conflict of science and religion, presenting science as its Good world and religion as its Evil world.

Key words: Catholic Church, conflict, conspiracy, Evil, Good, Illuminati, Science.

Dedication

I dedicate this to myself; first for believing it was impossible, and second for proving
it wrong...

To my brother's soul "Mohamed Amine"

To my beloved parents whose love always strengthens my will.

To my lovely sisters: khaoula and Maroua.

To the most annoying creatures in my life, to my darling nephews Mohamed and
Razan.

All the love to the one person who believed in me the most, my beloved fiancé
Dahouni Ismail, thank you for always saying: "of course you can do it, I know you
can do it" in the very moment of lost and despair.

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General Introduction

General Introduction

The existence of two supreme opposed divine forces that caused the world to exist in religion is called Dualism, which was a phenomenon of major importance in the religions of the ancient world. Among these religions there is Manichaeism which emphasised on the cosmic struggle between two antithetical principles Good (Light) and Evil (Darkness). Broadly speaking, Manicheans attributed Good with beauty, benevolence, altruism, good deeds and all qualities which stem from the feeling of empathy, whereas Evil was linked to darkness, imperfection, aggressive and any criteria that cause turmoil. Very often, this duality of Good and Evil was firmly connected to the most debated and never ending conflict of science and religion, relating science to Good and Evil to religion.

The Enlightenment Era or Age of Reason flourished during the 18th century drastically causing the change of the world. This period was known for rational thinking based on the presumption that the universe might be best understood through the reliance on observation and reason. At the time, the Roman Church was the provider of knowledge and its beliefs were considered to be the truth and anyone that questioned God was seen as being a sinner and deserved persecution. The harshness of the Roman Church was the reason behind the struggle between science and religion. Thence, this issue was highly mirrored by different writers in their literary works, presenting the oppression of scientists by the church; where they presented science as benevolence and religion as malevolence.

Angels and Demons (2000) by Dan Brown was probably the best novel which presented the conflict between faith and reason, in which the author relied on the

pervasive view of the eternal conflict between science and religion, setting them as historical arch-enemies, portraying religion as Evil of Manichaeism and science as its Good; who have been trying to remove one another from society, which motivated tackling this research, in order to get a clear understanding for such a judgment. Thus, the present paper will discuss the novel from a Manichean perspective and try to disclose how Dan Brown dropped the Manichean beliefs in his novel. In an attempt for finding resolution to this problematic, the core of this work will present two major questions:

1. Did Dan Brown adopt the Manichean principles in his novel angels and demons?
2. How did Dan Brown compare the conflict between religion and science with the conflict between light and darkness?
3. How did the novel *Angels and Demons* depict the Manichean conflict of good and evil?

In the light of the questions above it can be hypothesized that Dan brown adopted the Manichean beliefs in writing his novel and linked the struggle between science and religion with the struggle in Manichaeism between Light and Darkness referring to science as the Manichean Good and religion as the Manichean Evil.

The study is divided into three chapters: the first chapter *An Insight into Manichaeism* serves as a cultural context including the historical background of Manichaeism and the presence of its doctrine in modern literature. The second chapter, entitled *The Conspiratorial Secret Societies, Science and Religion*, deal with the exploration of conspiracy theory, secret societies as well as science and the Catholic Church. Whereas the last chapter *The Factional Angels and Demons and the Manichean*

Conflict the assessment of the novel both as fact and fiction, then the reflection of secret societies and their conspiracy in the novel. By the end, it will mainly concentrate on the connection between the Manichean Good and science and the Manichean Evil and religion in *Angels and Demons*.

The major impediments faced during the course of this study were the lack of documentation due to unavailability of library in the university and time constrain.

Chapter I

An Insight into Manichaeism

1.1 Introduction:

The essence of the Manichaean religion was that, the world was composed of two ancient origins, one of which was Light and the other was Darkness. In another study they were mentioned as a result of a struggle or revolution between the Light and the Angels of heaven against the Dark and Evil revolution. This chapter will shed a light on the historical background of Manichaeism, next its doctrine representing its two realms “the realm of Light and the realm of Darkness” and their continued conflict. Then, it will tackle the Manichean understanding of Good and Evil. By the end, it will cover Dan Brown’s literature and how good and evil were reflected in his writings.

1.2 An insight into Manichaeism:

During the third century BC, a dualistic religious philosophy called Manichaeism arose in Persia. It was established by Persian prophet Mani and named after him, he believed himself to be the advocate of Christ as predicted in the verse 14.16 from Holy book the *Gospel of John*: “And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever” 14.16

According to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* Mani was born in April 14, 216 in southern Babylonia, part of modern day Iraq. Patek, his father, was from Hamadan, he believed in baptism and of ultimate “self-discipline”. His mother, named Mays was a descent of the family of Kamsaragan, a Parthian noble family.

In his book *An Introduction to Manichaeism* Prods Oktor Skjaervo stated that at the age of twelve, Mani had his first spiritual vision; after that he professed to have had visions of the Holy Spirit, who disclosed to him godly secrets. In 240, when Mani was twenty four, he received a divine commission to proclaim his beliefs in public.

According to Mani the teachings of Buddha, Zoroaster, and Jesus were deficient, and that his disclosures were for the whole universe, considering it as the "religion of Light".

The idea of the existence of two basic supreme contradicted principles in religion is called Dualism. It is the belief of a conflict between the benevolent and the malevolent. It simply implies that there are two opposites at work. Dualism as defined by Matt Stefon and Ugo Bianchi in their article entitled *Dualism* (2011) they emphasized that duality signify a set of views concerning the presence of two opposed forces, principles, or supernatural entities at work in the world, such as God / Satan, good / evil, which brought forth the creation of the cosmos.

Manichaeism had combined the practices and ideologies of different religions, mainly Zoroastrianism¹ and Buddhism. Mani considered his dogma not as a religion concerned with certain groups of people or an area; he considered it as a completion of previous religions.

In an introductory essay entitled *On the Manichaean Heresy* from the book series *A select library of the Nicene and post-Nicene fathers of the Christian Church* (1858), Dr. Newman depicted the common points between Manichaeism and Zoroastrianism where according to him, the relation between both religious system was assumed and incontrovertible. The Manichean adaptation of Zoroastrian beliefs made it very often exemplified as Zoroastrian dualism. (Newman 30). Many points of

¹Zoroastrianism was a dualistic religion founded by Zoroaster or Zarathustra. During the 6th century, it arose in Persia modern day Iran. It was characterised by worshiping a God called Ahura Mazda who required good acts for helping him in his universal conflict against Evil spirit called Ahrimen.

resemblance were common between Manichaeism and Zoroastrianism; the main one was their dualistic nature. Both were constructed upon the idea of the existence of two realms one of Light and other of Darkness that were in a continual conflict.

Different elements in Manichaeism have been claimed to be of Buddhism origin. In his article *Buddhist Elements in Manichaeism* (2005) Bryder argued that the mainly shared element between Buddhism and Manichaeism was metempsychosis² which had its exact counterpart in Manichaeism. The doctrine of metempsychosis in both religions was parallel related to any living specie. Manicheans borrowed this notion and considered the elements of light (life) that creatures include as God particles and, and any harm done to them was seen as obstruction that prevent light from being transmitted again to the world of Light. The Buddhist perspective toward matter as opposite to spirit was foundational; it was matter and affection of the body that deceive. Thus, the Manichean doctrine of the evil nature of matter was outgrowth of the Buddhist asceticism.

For instance, Manichaeism as stated before taught an elaborate dualistic cosmology, defining the struggle between a good spiritual world of Light governed by the Father of Greatness and an evil material world of Darkness under the rule of Prince of Darkness, the two realms originally lived in entirely separated worlds. Manicheans asserted that the universe came into existence as a result of a battle between Good and Evil. The major conflict in Manichaeism is the clash between Light "God" and Dark "Evil. This conflict resulted in the creation of the world in three phases: First creation; Second creation and Third creation.

² A Greek philosophical concept similar to reincarnation, often referred to as "transmigration of souls" describing the process of a soul being transferred to another body after death.

In her article entitled *Manichaeism - One of the Most Popular Religions of the Ancient World* (2005) M.R Reese argued that the first creation started by a universe in which Good and Evil existed independently far from each other, until the moment when Evil became aware of the existence of good and launched an invasion of the Kingdom of Light. The second creation was when the father of greatness started creating the cosmos using the dead bodies of evil and light consumed by them. The third and last creation was when the evil went to heaven in order to retake the light removed from their bodies and after getting enough light, evil started copulating and produced Adam and Eve, whom by their turn gave birth to all humans.

The well known Catholic philosopher and most influential father; Augustine of Hippo had converted to Christianity in 387AD, after nine years of being a Manichean. His scriptures helped people to have an idea about Manichaeism and its doctrine, as well as its beliefs. Most of his writings were opposed to Manichaeism, Augustine believed that every creature was innately good and what Manichean claimed to be evil, for him is actually the absence of goodness. Therefore, the thing that Augustine and Manichaeism contradicted in is the existence of evil that he did not consider even as a thing and denied its existence.

Manichaeism based its dogma upon the existence of two worlds: the world of Light and the world of Darkness, two contradicted powers living in a continued conflict and caused the existence of the actual universe.

1.3 The Manichaeian Doctrine:

The concept of dualism in the construction of the universe was the notion upon which the Manichean doctrine was based. Thus the ground rule of this doctrine was a radical complex dualism and opposition between Light the good and Darkness the

evil. In this context Hector stated in his article entitled “*Augustine the Manichaeian and the Problem of Evil (1990)*” that, the predominant characteristic of this doctrine is a radical duality and opposition, as for example, between Light and Darkness and between Good and Evil. (Hector 3)

According to the Manichean beliefs the powers of Good and Evil, out of their mixture the present world was created and as a consequence they lived in an unending struggle. In his book *The Old and New Testament Connected in the History of the Jews and Neighbouring Nations* Prideaux noted that:

That under him there were two angels one the angel of light (...) and the other the angel of darkness (...) and that these two, out of the mixture of light and darkness, made all things that are; that they are in a perpetual struggle with each other (...)” (Prideaux 196).

Manicheans believed that these two different entities lived separately each one in his own world that fit its criteria.

1.3.1 The World of Light as Good:

The Realm of Light Governed and created by the all good God the Father of greatness which had existed from eternity, it is located in height where it is hardly ever reached, it is everlasting and exceptional. The world of Light was peaceful, blissful and self sufficient, it was full of good truth where calmness, wisdom, comfort and oracle existed. Hector mentioned that Light resides in knowledge, revelation, the soul, the heavens, repose and endurance, that is, the Good. (Hector 3)

On the other hand, Esmailpour in his book *Creation Myth in Manichaeism* edited by Victor H.Mair (2005) the Father of Greatness is described as good and

fecund tree that only born good fruits he is the infinite beauty and the absolute light. He was the God of all Gods and the father of all humanity. The realm of light or the paradise of light is described as quiet place where fear does not exist. It is also characterised by healthiness, cheerfulness without any sadness and hate. In the world of light there is no separation, devastation or darkness, it is a world completely full of light. (Esmailpour 55)

Located in the south and opposed to the world of Light there existed the world of Darkness which was completely different from the realm of Light.

1.3.2 The World of Darkness as Evil:

In accordance to the Manichean beliefs The Realm of Darkness was located in the South, profound downwards and expanded endlessly only to the South. It was reigned by the Prince of Darkness, it was characterised by smoke, fire, storm, mud and darkness. The world of Darkness was deep and boundless from each side, apart on the north, which is bordered by the Realm of Light. The leader of this world was the Devil or the King of Darkness. He was not everlasting in nature, but he got inside him eternal substances. Once the Devil began life, he was ready to devour and devastate everything. The essence of darkness was awful, incomplete, vicious, turbid and putrid, bearing a Self that was evil, low, stupid, offensive and foolish, and his action is combined with evildoing, corruption, damage and deficiency. (Esmailpour, 56)

The world of Darkness got aware of the existence of other realm consisting of lightening substances, so it conspired against it in order to steal the light particles. The world of Darkness attempted to invade the world of Light; however the latter knew

the plan of the Evil concerning the invasion and became conscious. As Esmailpour maintained:

When he saw the sparkling of light, he worried and, since he saw that the more he ascended, the more he trembled (...). Afterwards, he decided to ascend once more. The Realm of Light, however, realized the Devil's wicked purpose for slaughter and corruption. (Esmailpour 58)

The invasion of the world of Darkness to the world of Light resulted in an eternal conflict between them, the world of Light aiming to restore the stolen Light particles and the world of Darkness trying to invade the other. Unconsciously this struggle ended up with the creation of the universe which was half Good and half Evil.

1.3.3 The Conflict between the World of Darkness and the World of Light:

Since the beginning of time, the Manichean realms of Light and Darkness were contradicted separated worlds until the world of Darkness started approaching the borders of the world of Light which its greatness bred in it (the realm of Darkness) the desire to take control over it. Consequent to the attack made by Darkness against Light the creation of a world which combined the two forces: the Good and the Evil took place. As Burkitt maintained in his book *The Journal of Religions* (1922):

In the past the Dark and Light were separate, but the Dark somehow conceived a passion for the Light, its opposite, and made an assault upon it whereby a portion of Light became mixed with the Dark, was in fact swallowed by it. As a result to this mixture of Light with Dark this present tangible world came

into being, not being wholly of the Light or of the Dark but being essentially mixed. (Burkitt 296)

This conflict resulted in a chaos in the world. After being a composition of two distinct isolated worlds, it became mixed. Burkitt continued mentioning that Mani explained the first disorder of the eternal order of the world as a result of the realization of the world of Darkness that something out there pleasant and far from its regions existed, its uncontrolled desire caused the cosmos starting. (270) Thus, the Manichean perception of Good and Evil was completely different from the commonly known understanding, they had their own one.

1.4 The Manichean Understanding of Good and Evil:

Manicheans considered Good and Evil as a rigorous contradicted forces, that lived independently until the assault made by the world of Darkness upon the world of Light as a consequence they became intermingled, the thing that raised the Manichean dilemma of how to distinguish Good from Evil?. In his book *Manichaeism and Its Legacy* (2009) Kiven Coyle concerning the Manichean understanding of Good and Evil argued that Manicheans had a different understanding of Good and Evil, it was believed that Manicheans understood Good and associate it with prettiness and calmness while evil with everything that make people suffer. (Coyle52)

1.4.1 The Notion of Good in Manichaeism:

Being a dualistic religion created upon the belief of the existence of two principles one Good and other Evil give raise to the question of; on which basis did Manicheans define some things as "evil" and others as "good"?

Manichean associated any shining as Good such as sun and moon, due to the fact of being composed of good i.e. light particles released from the world of Darkness. So, since Manicheans were able to see the sun and moon shining they assert, indisputably, that they should be determined with Light.

According to Coyle Manicheans viewed the sun and the moon Good, due to the fact of being composed of good i.e. light particles released from regarded as good's contrast. So, according to Manicheans, since they were able to see the sun and moon shining they assert, indisputably, that they should be determined with Light. (Coyle 58)

The physical brightness was highly appreciated by the Manichees and referred to as good, due to its indication of Light, accordingly things are easily seen when they are shinier. In the basis of dualism, everything is supposed as good or evil in accordance to their consistency/dissonance, conflict/ integration, distortion/satisfactory look. It might be more precise to say that things or acts were aesthetically delightful = beautiful = good in straight proportion to their dematerialization.

Notwithstanding, relating the Manichean perspective toward the physical origin of the universe with the idea of "beauty" was barely restricted to the physically satisfying. (Coyle 59) as stated in the *Psalm of Heracleides* "They that glory in their beauty gladly let it decay." (qtd in Coyle 59)

The notion of good in Manichaeism had also been related to good doings of humans, such as their contribution in the conscientious Manichaeian duty which was releasing the Light captured by evil and separating Light and Darkness once again.

Mani was asked by a Nazorean about his God whether he was good or bad, Mani answered him:

My god is a judge [. . .]. The judge is no evildoer, but [his] work is to annihilate the badness [thus] confining evil [. . .]. Whoever commits evil brings evil on his own head. On the other hand, whoever has done what is constant and good fills himself with the reward of the good that he has done. (qtd in Coyle 60)

Taking things from one point of view, it might be concluded that good in Manichaeism is only related to aesthetic or beauty, but when seeing things from Manichean moral perspective good is everything related to human acts and good doings that help in liberating Good/ Light from Evil/ Darkness.

1.4.2 The Concept of Evil in Manichaeism:

The fundamental tenet of the Manichean faith was the accordance of Light with the Good soul and Darkness with the Evil matter. The notion of evil in Manichaeism was understood upon the principle that evil existed independently of the good within its own realm, and as there was a nature of Good there was a nature of Evil. Evil began by the desire of Darkness to Light. Evil was associated with four elements: smoke, fire, wind and water.

In the book *Researches in Manichaeism* (1932) William Jackson argued that Manicheans believed that Evil was diabolical and material and its appearance manifested in the first disturbance of the cosmos when it conquered the world of darkness. (Jackson 13) On the other hand, Lieu in his book *Manichaeism in the Later Roman Empire and Medieval China* (1985) stated that unlike good, evil in Manichaeism was not simply related to wicked deeds, in fact everything that was

unpleasing and caused the disturbance of existence by harmful acts was considered evil. (Lieu 151)

Manicheans viewed Evil as matter which was created for a devilish purposes mainly for catching the Light inside it. The creation of human beings according to Mani was repulsive because he believed that demon from the world of darkness and his female copulated and gave birth to Adam and Eve and thus being half Evil and half good. These various creations accounts reveal the central emphasis in Manichaeism on matter being evil.

As Adam and Eve were created by demons and the world of Darkness was also created by a demon god thus everything that is material then would only remain evil due to its nature. Beside matter, sin was also seen as evil in the Manichean beliefs, and they pray during the Bema festival³ to their prophet Mani and ask him to forgive them for their acts, because they considered any action in “the physical body” sinful. As Lieu maintained:

And if a man walks on the ground, he damages the earth. And whoever moves his hand causes damage to the air; for the air is the soul of men, of animals, of birds, of fishes and of reptiles and of anything else there is in the world. (Lieu 185)

Manicheans gave much importance to the concept of Evil, an attempted to give a clear explanation concerning its existence. They feared Evil more than they

³The Bema Festival is one of the holiest days of the Manichaean calendar, it commemorated the passing of Prophet Mani, in which the whole Manichean community gathered and confess their sins. They considered their confessions in this festival as an absolution for the sins they committed a year before.

valued the Good powers and believed that it existed everywhere side by side with the Good causing a continual trouble and distress in the world.

The dualistic nature of the universe i.e. the existence of two different often opposite and irreducible principles which made the balance of the universe was highly depicted in the system of religions and philosophy. The notion of dualism influenced many authors and was omnipresent in their writings, among them Robert Louis Stevenson with his novella *Strange Case of Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde* (1886) in which he attempted to present the duplicity of life and the interplay of good and evil within a person. On the other hand the most famous American thriller writer Dan Brown, in most of his works, he depicted the struggle of every two opposed forces mainly the science and religion conflict, portraying one as good and other as evil.

1.5 Dan Brown's Literature: Good and Evil:

The attractive form of writing of Dan Brown which he embraced in his novels resulted in an extraordinary success. Novels by Brown were persistently mysteries combined with historical marvels and realistic issues. Moreover, readers considered his novels as inspirational and amusing, due to the fact that they illuminate the reader's mind by conveying knowledge about various issues that relate history and reality, and at the same time offer amusement through the attractive disclosures and unlimited excites on the other.

In their book *The Dan Brown Craze* (2016) Zhenwu Zhu and Aiping Zhang maintained that it has been broadly recognized that Brownian literature not just covers a broad scope of subjects, for example, history, art, literature, religion, and science, yet in addition, it related them to prevailing mysteries and sensible matters of present days. The events and wrangling mentioned in his novels whether documented

or was considerably discussed throughout years or more, made Brown obliged to gather the exact information and disseminate them while writing both precisely and vigorously. (Zhu and Zhang 4)

The essence of his successful writing is his resoluteness to endeavour for a literary work that is well structured of meaning, importance and enthusiasm. His aim of writing is not only limited to entertaining the reader, however, also to motivate his ideational inquisitiveness concerning issues that are according to him thought-provoking and raising the awareness of readers concerning things happening around them.

Dan Brown rarely depends in his writings on straightforward reference; instead his works were loaded with historical aspects, science, art, religion, narration and mystery. He likes the re-examination, deconstruction and even subversion of his information so as to make the combination of history and imagination easy and provide for his readers a fresh and illuminated reading experiment. The “Robert Langdon Series”, which incorporated *Angels & Demons* (2000) and other works, was a perfect mixture of religion, excitement, art, and thrilling. His stories were entangled with old history, mysterious works of art, or ambiguous legends yet they were constantly linked to the real issues faced in everyday life.

The literary works of Dan Brown were famous by the way in which they question and criticize religion and drawing attention to the challenges faced by the religion. The fact that Brown grew in a house in which his father was a mathematics teacher and his mother a church organist. Thus it was clearly understood why most of Dan Brown's works include the concept of science and religion and deal with their relation.

In most of his books more specifically *Angels & Demons* (2000) and *The Da Vinci Code* (2003) he dealt with the old age conflict between science and religion which were presented as enemies in a continuing conflict for dominance. It is clearly revealed, when reading the literary works of Dan Brown, that he was trying to make his readers distinguish between the nature of “Good” and the nature of “Evil” through the representation of the unending war between science which he consider as good/light and religion which is, frequently, in all his writings reflected as evil/darkness.

1.6 Conclusion:

To conclude, this chapter has shown the basis of the Manichean religion, starting by its origins, moving to its doctrine which is about the existence of two different worlds one Good/Light and other Evil/Darkness that lived separately until the Evil’s evasion of the world of Light that resulted in their conflict and thus the creation of the world in which we are living. Afterwards, the chapter raised discussion concerning the way Manicheans interpreted the notion of Good and the concept of Evil, one referring to as beauty and calmness that is the Good and other as devilish and causing pain that is Evil. At the end, the chapter slightly shade a light on Dan Brown’s conspiratorial and mysterious literature in which he frequently tackles the relation between science and religion and representing them as arch-enemies referring to one as Evil “religion” and other as Good “science” Thereafter, the second chapter will be completely devoted for explaining conspiracy theory, secret societies and science and religion.

Chapter II

The Conspiratorial Secret

Societies, Science and Religion

2.1 Introduction:

Throughout history it has been asserted that god was in charge of people's lives and everything was controlled by him, and by the 18th century when the enlightenment emerged people removed god from its place as a controller and believed that humans are the only responsible of their own society. The belief that God was behind what humans were facing, became under the control of humans themselves. As a consequence conspiracy theory appeared and people started blaming mainly religion and secret societies for what they are facing. This chapter will mainly deal with conspiracy theory, secret societies and science and religion.

2.2 Conspiracy Theory:

The first use of the word conspiracy dated back to the late 14th century. To conspire was derived from the Latin which literally means to breathe together; *con-* meaning with or together and *spirare* mean to breathe, based on the fact of the agreement by "spoken oath" for accomplishing an evil act. (Douglas)

The concept of conspiracy theory emerged in min 20th century by 1937, it was defined as an evil, illegal, harmful or surreptitious plan formulated in secret by a group of powerful people, in order to achieve their personal goals, at the expense commonweal. The most famous feature of conspiracy theories was that all of them were related to power and the way of gaining and utilizing it. Joseph Uscinski and Joseph Parent wrote a book entitled *American Conspiracy Theories* in which they attributed four criteria for defining conspiracy theory a group of people (1), acting secretly (2), trying to gain power (3) against the common good(4). As they maintained:

Historical, ongoing, or future events that cites as a main causal factor a group of powerful persons, the conspirators, acting in secret for their own benefit against the common good. (...) One important facet of conspiracy theories that often goes without much notice is that conspiracy theories are notions about power: who has it and how are they using it? Conspiracy theories accuse an implicitly powerful group of conspiring. Usually that group is already powerful, i.e., the president, a legislative body, industries or corporations, foreign countries, multinational groups, etc. (Uscinski and Parent 235)

Conspiracy theories resulted in a sentiment of oppression and lack of trust, those who believe in conspiracy theory presumed that conspirators aimed to manipulate the fate of the world for their own egoistic benefits. As Richard Hofstadter mentioned in his essay *The Paranoid Style in American Politics* originally published in (1964):

The distinguishing thing about the paranoid style is not that its exponents see conspiracies or plots here and there in history, but that they regard a 'vast' or 'gigantic' conspiracy as the motive force in historical events. History is a conspiracy, set in motion by demonic forces of almost transcendent power. (Hofstadter 29)

It can be said that the existence of conspiratorial acts in history, in which people with power behave secretly for their goals, and thus anything done secretly was then conspiratorial, and the main features that can be attributed conspiracy were their massiveness, huge and engagement in absolute evil with an all encompassing power aiming to ruin a life.

Quoting the famous essay of Hofstadter, different social scientists characterised conspiracy theories as having the same features previously mentioned.

For instance Oliver J. Eric and Thomas J. Wood in their book *Conspiracy Theories and the Paranoid Style(s) of Mass Opinion* (2014) compared conspiracies to the Manichean conflict between good and evil and described them as implicit demonic forces and. They stated that:

First, [conspiracy theories] locate the source of unusual social and political phenomena in unseen, intentional, and malevolent forces. Second, they typically interpret political events in terms of a Manichean struggle between good and evil. (Oliver and Wood 953)

Likewise, Bale covered a similar ground. In his book *Political paranoia v. political Realism*(2007) mentioned that conspirators viewed the world similarly to Manichean religion and also described them as nearly all-powerful, devilish and never failing their goals. (Bale 51)

The conspiratorial idea of conceiving one as inferior, less successful had an impact in all fields. In literature for instance, it was adopted by many authors in creating their plotlines.

2.2.1 Conspiracy Literature:

The commonsense distinction between fact and fiction disappeared slowly because of conspiracy fiction. Authors of conspiracy literature strikingly made changing roles in their writing, and claim what seem as fact to the worldwide was fiction and vice versa. Conspiracy in literature had two functions: stigmatizing knowledge and suppressing it.

Literature of conspiracy was initially designed for secret conspirators that turned public, mostly dealing with ambiguous elements which were hardly interpreted by readers claiming that they were presenting truth, being precise and accurate, As Michael Barkun stated in his book *ACulture of Conspiracy* (2003) that:

Conspiracy literature is replete with instances in which manifestly fictional products, such as films and novels, are asserted to be accurate, factual representations of reality. In some cases, they are deemed to be encoded messages, originally intended for the inner circle of conspirators that somehow became public. (Barkun 29, 30)

Moreover, it is believed that providing facts as they would cause disquieting for readers, thus authors relied on fictionalising facts for the sake of entertaining and enlightening people at a time. Nevertheless, fictionalisation was considered as an attack made by conspirators in order to prepare or construct a naive audience for their future personal gains.

Readers of conspiracy fiction must doubt the given facts question them and read what was not said, because they are an attentive and distorted sort of truth, the aim of fiction writings was blurring history and fictionalization it through mixing facts with fiction, due to the lack of reaching true facts as they were. Thus readers ought to be suspicious about the given facts that authors themselves were unsure about them. As Eva Horn emphasized in her book *Conspiracies and Conspiracy theory –A Brief Introduction to DARK POWER* (2008):

The conspiracy narrative, (...) make the coherence incoherent. An interested and distorted version of a truth (...) it means reading between the lines we must also be mistrusting about the nature of the facts on which they rely and distrust the facts themselves. (...) Fictionalization of reality might be to blur or artfully mingle the genres of historiography and fiction, to fictionalize history by constantly being aware of the fact that there is no direct grip on the “real facts” (Horn 4)

Conspiracy literature or paranoid thrillers which incorporated dark, criminal elements and different conspiracies (as stated before) was a genre of literary thrillers, mirrored in many literary thrillers. Many authors were influenced by this genre and they built their novels upon excitement, anxiety, tension, suspense and fear. The most notable authors of the 20th century were Umberto Eco with his novel *Foucault's Pendulum* (1988) and Dan Brown with his popular novels *Angels and Demons* (2000) and *The Da Vinci Code* (2003) both revolving around conspiracy theories including the Roman Catholic Church, Opus Dei and the secret society of the Illuminati.

Since conspiracy was generally speaking related to secret groups and act, so conspiracy literature must be related to secrecy, including an old historical, group or fact as its main element acting mysteriously toward some end.

2.2.2 Conspiracy and Mystery:

Conspiracy and mystery fit hand in glove as Barkun noted in his book *A Culture of Conspiracy* (2003) that conspiracy was divided upon two types the group and the activities of the group. The group which might mysterious or famous, while the other regards the acts of the group that might be public or secret, hence conspiracy was tightly related to mystery. As he argued:

Conspiracy and secrecy seem indissolubly linked. Yet conspiracy beliefs involve two distinguishable forms of secrecy. One concerns the group itself; the second concerns the group's activities. A group may be secret or known, and its activities may be open or hidden. (Barkun 4)

To put in another way the first group combined between being mysterious and open at the same time yet acting secretly, and substantially being all-powerful, this type was one of the most important types in conspiracy. Despite their openness people were unable to reveal them to public; they only affirmed that this group possessed a great

power and was unseen to the unenlightened observer. One of these notable groups which can be stated the Illuminati; a secret conspiracist group that had been easily revealed by authorities yet, still active on conspiracist fields. On the other side, and by contrast to the first type, this type was public while its acts were secretly done. The Devilish activities of the group obliged its members to hide them and instead reveal their identities to the public.

In an article entitled *Secrecy and Conspiracy* Matthew R. Dentith and Martin Orr defined secrecy as strange, obscure and “multifaceted”. They believed that depending on the goals conspirators were willing to achieve and the ways they follow in doing so, they knew from whom their secrets should be hidden whether being simple or “grandiose”. As they argued:

In each and every case of conspiracy, from the simplest to the most grandiose, the secrets that must be kept, and from whom those secrets must be kept, is contingent upon the goals, strategies and tactics employed (...) Secrecy, it turns out, is peculiar, complex and multifaceted. (Dentith and Orr 10)

Exposing horrible conspiracies planned by outdated secret societies, questioning the relation between science and religion, conspiracy, mystery and thrilling were the main features in almost, all novels produced by Dan Brown.

2.2.3 Conspiracy in Dan Brown’s Literature:

The emergences of secret societies and conspiracy theory during the 21st century influenced many writers and shaped their literary works. Novels written by Dan Brown must be the best example for conspiracy literature. Dan Brown is famous by solving mysterious puzzles and fictionalizing facts that were the main reason behind his success.

The famous 9/11 attack created an atmosphere that motivated authors to write about conspiracy and thus produced a market full of conspiracy novels among them novels by Dan Brown, which their main themes revolved around conspiracy theory concerning the history of religion such as: *Angels and demons* (2000) and *The Da Vinci Code* (2003). In his article *The Dan Brown Phenomenon: Conspiracism in Post-9/11 Popular Fiction* (2011) argued Matthew Schneider-Mayerson that likewise Robert Ludlum (whose writings were about conspiracy) Dan Brown assumed that readers need to know about the hidden powers whose intentions and motivations were evil as well as mysterious secret societies that were manipulating the public and governing the world such as secret societies. (Schneider-Mayerson 1, 3)

3.2 The Secret Societies:

The Notion of secret societies was hotly debated and open to various interpretations. According to the popular belief, secret societies were group of people meeting secretly, plotting for changing the world through destroying religion. According to the Oxford dictionary secret societies were “organizations whose members are sworn to secrecy about its activities” (OED).

Secret societies were defined by Gardiner as a group of people claiming that their original aim was making the change to the world, sometimes they succeed in making so and sometimes they fail, but frequently they contributed in the change of society as whole. The fact of being prevented from passing the truth, they were obliged to lean upon secrecy. They had secrets share among their few members, they were influential old and possessed power. As Gardiner stated in his book *Secret Societies: Gardiner's Forbidden Knowledge* (2007):

A secret and deadly group of individuals who have a history going back thousands of years. They had a name, they had a power base, and they had a secret, locked away within their initiated few, which had major implications for the future of mankind. (Gardiner 22)

Based on what have been stated previously secret societies can be described as ancient conspiracies asserting their origins from a legendary founder; those secret societies were trying to achieve secret activities. They claimed that they get power from their secrecy as they deny the existence of any new secret society. It was also believed that five kinds of secret societies existed, the most notable ones were three types: the first one, its existence and membership were known to public, while their activities were done secretly. The second one; its existence was acknowledged, whereas members and the aims of the group were secret. The third one, though it was talked about, many propagandas were shared concerning its existence; hence few tangible facts were known about it. According to various definitions no secret society seemed to be modern.

The British author Heckethorn classified secret societies in his book; *The secret societies of all ages and countries* (1875) as follow “political, mysterious, scientific and religious” (Heckethorn⁴) associating different functions for each secret societies, most of the time they were attempting to dominate the world via destructing the church (because of its dominance and harshness) or enlighten it. Among the religious secret societies there was the “Illuminate” the oldest one that is claimed to be the mother of all secret societies.

2.3.1 The Secret Society of Illuminati:

The first use of the term illuminates date back to the late 14th century. Illuminate, the plural form of the Latin word “*illuminates*” meaning “to throw into light, make bright, light up”, the word was associated with different groups tending to be extremely enlightened.

According to *Encyclopedia Britannica* the secret society of the illuminate was created as by a Bavarian professor of Canon law⁴, German thinker and a former Jesuit called Adam Weishaupt in 1776 that existed for a short time, its main objective was to remove Christianity and substitute it by a religion of reason. The illuminate refer to a conspiracy theory, which main focus was controlling the whole world. It was believed that the illuminate possessed a spiritual enlightenment and that they rule politics, media, business and entertainment. The illuminate defectors who spoke out about the society were assassinated. Hence it was believed that JFK assassination was done by the Illuminate.

Joseph Castro mentioned in his article *What is the Illuminati?* (2013) that Weishaupt was against the fanaticism and dogmatism of the church, the thing that led him to criticize it publicly, especially when it started having a powerful impact on the University of Ingolstadt beside the government and policies of Bavaria (a state in Germany), his claims and his stance gave rise to defiance with Jesuits. After this dispute he felt the need to create a secret society for freethinkers that would deceive the "enemies of reason". Weishaupt believed that the persecution of the church would

⁴ Canon Law is a set of ecclesiastical laws, especially (in the Roman Catholic Church) that laid down by papal pronouncements, to regulate its external organization and government and to order and direct the activities of Catholics toward the mission of the Church.

be abolished by the Illuminati and devastate it in order to make an end to warfare, unawareness and the conflict for force.

The secret society of the illuminati gathered only powerful members in society, due to their impact on society as whole and for supporting and sharing the same beliefs, amongst them, wealthy people, scholars, intellectuals, liberals and the enlightened ones. The “hierarchical” patterns and schemes of the Jesuit were adopted and used by the illuminati to control people, under the guise of influencing, providing knowledge and freeing them, for the sake of gaining power. In this context Michael Bradley stated in his *Secret Societies Handbook* (2005) that:

The organization copied the hierarchical structure of the Jesuits and the freemasons and ever since, the illuminati has used a variety of tactics to motivate blackmail, and manipulate people in the name of enlightenment, freedom, and emancipation in order to maintain power. (...) This involved enticing honest visionaries, rich people, society women, free thinkers, liberals, scientists or any enlightened group that they could convince to further their interest. (Bradley 64, 65)

Concerning the Illuminati Gardiner mentioned in his book *Secret Societies: Gardiner's Forbidden Knowledge* (2007) that, after the creation of the Illuminati the world witnessed a great number of revolts, disorder and an incredibly changing equilibrium of powers. The reason behind the anonymity of the Illuminati was their desire for continuing their functions. Nevertheless, until modern days no one seems to be able to say to what extent did the Illuminati impacted the universe, and that the reason behind its anonymity. (Gardiner 171)

Despite the fact of being once a Catholic Adam Weishaupt possessed a great hatred to Catholicism and its oppression, ignorance and the conflict for power. He aimed to create an enlightened world where no trace of religion could be found. These objectives resulted in raising a conflict between the Roman Catholic Church and the Illuminati.

2.3.2 The Illuminati and the Roman Catholic Church:

Before diving directly into the relationship between the illuminati and the Roman church, it is drastically significant to shed light on a third concept which is the enlightenment or what is commonly known as the Age of reason, for the simple fact that the concept draws the link between the illuminati and the Roman Catholic Church.

Enlightenment as defined by Jessie Szaly in her article entitled "*what is enlightenment?*" she asserted that enlightenment was a philosophical movement that occurred in Europe and later in North America during the late 17th century and the early 18th century. The founding fathers of the movement believed that they were illuminating the humanity intellectually and culturally after the crisis of the middle ages which could only be described as dark as a result of the persecution and the hegemony practiced by the Roman Catholic Church. The main traits of enlightenment were reason, liberty, and scientific method. The enlightenment bred the experimental science of Francis Bacon, Isaac Newton, Galileo, Copernicus and many others. The scientific discoveries of these intellectuals were often controversial as they clearly contradicted many aspects of the Christian faith that were thought to be an absolute truth. This made the participants of movement denounce religion and adopt deism where they only believed in the existence of God.

Going back to the core of this particular part, which is the link between the Roman Catholic Church and the Illuminati. In an article written by Isabel Hernandez, entitled “*Meet the Man Who Started the Illuminati*”, Hernandez discussed the foundation of the secret society of illuminati saying that its founder Adam Weishaupt who was a strong believer in the principles and the ideas of the enlightenment and despite his Catholic background, Weishaupt believed that Europe was better off without the Roman Catholic Church as for him it was repressing freedom of thought. In fact Weishaupt believed that religion is no longer tangible given to modern societies. He found the illuminati in hope of creating a world of liberty and moral equality.

2.4 Science and the Roman Catholic Church:

Although science and religion are two distinct fields, one based on reason knowledge and evidence while the other based on spirituality and faith. In the need of having more explanations about the world and the existence of mankind, human being (mainly scientists) started having their personal research, instead of only relying on the teachings of the church, the thing that rise tension to the religious men.

In her article *Are Science and Religion Compatible?* Julie Jackson asserted that religion in general was viewed by some scientists as senseless because it was hardly understood, as they looked at its followers with arrogance and claimed that religious restriction forced by the church in society are ridiculous and should be annihilated. On the other hand religious people felt that science was threatening their faith and aiming to prove the fallacy of their beliefs, and thus leading to the destruction of the basis of their belief.

One of the hotly debated issues was the relation between the Roman church and science. It was commonly known that, the Roman Church was against revealing any scientific truths which could falsify its teachings or claims. In the early 1600s the Italian catholic astronomer Galileo Galilei was told to stop supporting “Copernican system”⁵ which contradicted the religious scriptures concerning the movements of the earth and retain his beliefs. Instead Galileo continued sharing and teaching his beliefs, the thing which bothered the church. Consequently the church threatened him whether he deny his ideas which were viewed as “blasphemy” or he would be put into jail. Within this context John William Draper clearly stated in his book *History of the Conflict between Science and Religion* (1875) that:

Galileo was accused for impostor, heresy, blasphemy, atheism (...). He was summoned before the Holy Inquisition⁶ under an accusation to having thought that the earth moves round the sun a doctrine “utterly contrary to the Scriptures”. He was ordered to renounce that heresy, on pain of being imprisoned. (Draper 195)

After the publication of his book *The system of the world* (1632) Galileo was put again in front of the Holy Inquisition impeached for publically announcing the belief that earth moves around the sun. He was then obliged to deny truths; he was also thrown in prison and mercilessly “treated” until his last breath. As Draper stated: “He

⁵ Copernican system was a system or theory which refer to the polish astronomer Nicholas Copernicus who believed the sun being the centre of the cosmos and the Earth being one of the planets going around it

⁶The Holy Inquisition was a powerful office set up within the Catholic Church, established by Pope Gregory IX to root out and punish heresy throughout Europe and the Americas

was then committed to prison, treated with remorseless severity during the remaining ten years of his life” (Draper196)

The attitude of Catholic Church toward sciences and especially Galileo made it evil to other scientists, who were aiming to provide knowledge and truth to people.

2.4.1 Identifying the Catholic Religion as Evil:

Throughout history, it was difficult to give an exact definition to religion that might be commonly accepted by scholars, each had seen it from his own perspective specially scientists.

The etymology of the term “Religion” is supposed to be derived from the Latin word *Religio*, which literally mean adherence restraints or veneration. It might also refer to different Latin words such as *relegere*. In his book *De NaturaDeorum* (*On the Nature of the Gods*) written in 45 BC and translated by Francis Brooks in 1896 the Latin philosopher Cicero said that the word religion derived from *relegere* which literary mean in English to read again and consider things linked to worshipping gods. (Douglas)

Most people defined religion as a set of beliefs and the existence of a supernatural power dominating human beings lives and even their interpretations of nature. The restricted laws passed by the Catholic Church during the 16th century in the name of religion were refused by many scientists who believed that everything in the universe can be explained and understood by science.

By the 17th and 18th century science continued developing against blind ignorance and scientists started discovering the origin of the world and humans, these discoveries as claimed by the Catholic Church were against religious beliefs that

maintain the existence of supernatural powers affecting human's lives. As stated before, Galileo's Copernican perspective that the Earth revolves around the sun was viewed as a heresy by the church and forced him to stop supporting this idea or he would be imprisoned, as a result of the act of the Catholic Church toward Galileo some scientists and philosophers considered religion as evil and considered it as the enemy of knowledge and reason trying to ban human thinking.

The 19th century German Philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche was famous for his contradiction with religion which ended up with him to deny the existence of God and claiming His death. In his book *The Gay Science* (1882) Nietzsche stated that religion was a form of rejection of truth, forcing people to accept things as they were or to be more accurate it should be said how religion had represented them, and blindly accept its dogmas.

On the other side we have Karl Marx by his turn viewed religion as an illusion and devotion that deny acknowledging reality, oppressing people and giving them fake hope and happiness, and he also considered it as the "Opium" of people in the way which it makes them forget their pain and the sufferings they are facing in their life, without giving solutions. As he stated in his book *Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right* (1844): "Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, just as it is the spirit of a spiritless situation. It is the opium of the people". (Marx 3)

On the other hand, Sigmund Freud the psychologist who attempted to understand faith and spirituality, many of his works were dedicated to religion comprising *Totem and Taboo* (1913), *The Future of an Illusion* (1927), *Civilization and Its Discontents* (1930), and *Moses and Monotheism* (1938). Freud's doubtfulness

concerning the existence of God was clearly expressed in his book *The illusion future* (1927) in which he wonder if religion was right or wrong, an if there was a God or it was only present in our psychological desires. As he stated:

We shall tell ourselves that it would be very nice if there were a God who created the world and was a benevolent providence, and if there were a moral order in the universe and an after-life; but it is a very striking fact that all this is exactly as we are bound to wish it to be. And it would be more remarkable still if our wretched, ignorant and downtrodden ancestors had succeeded in solving all these difficult riddles of the universe. (Freud 33)

In his book in his book “*New Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis*” Freud viewed religion as an “illusion”that does not exist in fact and is only a satisfaction of certain desire, attempting to exert power over the external world. "Religion is an illusion and it derives its strength from the fact that it falls in with our instinctual desires." (Freud 192)

Due to the relation between science and religion, in which they were mostly known as two conflicting fields, it became crucial to mention religion whenever science is mentioned.

2.4.2 Identifying Science as Good

Science according to *Merriam WebsterDictionary* is knowledge or system of knowledge covering general truths or the operation of general laws especially as obtained and tested through scientific method.

In an article entitled *What is Science* (2017), Alina Bradford said that science is a systematic and a logical approach which main objective was discovering how the

universe worked. Furthermore, science focused only on the natural world. Alina Bradford continued on saying that the term science was derived from the Latin word *scientia* which means knowledge.

As mentioned previously sciences depend on the scientific method which was entailing observation, collecting data, forming hypothesis, experiment and results. By the 16th and 17th century, the scientific revolution changed the way people looked at the world. They started discovering new things concerning the universe's and human existence, as they interpreted the Bible rationally and came to the realization that what had been told by the church and religion concerning the creation of earth and its end was contradicting logic.

The famous French Enlightenment writer, historian, and philosopher deist Voltaire was predicted to be against religion, but instead he believed that religions should be respected, not due to its worth as divinity but because it helped in the understanding and controlling social stabilization.

Science according to Voltaire was not only a tool for supporting his deism instead it was a way for giving a concrete proof of it. In his Book *The Enlightenment and Science in 18th Century France (Studies on Voltaire)*(1973) Colm Kiernan believed that despite his tolerance and respect toward religions, Voltaire stood against persecutions done by the church, amongst them the persecution of Huguenot Calas family⁷ in 1762–63 because of their refusal of the new established clergy, he felt that

⁷ Huguenot Calas family were French Protestants in the 16th and 17th century who largely suffered severe persecution at the hands of the French Catholics Government, for denying the establishment of the new Catholic Clergy

he cannot neglect this oppression anymore as he had always been, so he joined the conflict against religious fanaticism.

The conception of religion as evil and science as good was a debated issue in all fields mainly literature, writers expressed this issues in their novels, in order to provide a clear understanding about the relation between science and religion. Dan Brown was one of these authors.

2.5 Conclusion:

To sum up, this chapter provided brief definition of conspiracy and its relation to literature and mystery as well as Dan Brown's literature, beside conspiracy theory the chapter covered the notion of secret societies mainly the illuminate and their relationship with the Roman Catholic Church. By the end, it reflects science and religion by providing several points of view of different scholars concerning them and how one looked at the other. Hence, the next chapter hence, the following and last chapter will be encountered with the novel angels and demons in which it assess it both as fact and fiction, then it will shed a light on the representation of secret societies mainly and their conspiracy. Finally it will deal with the nature of the conflict between science and religion and how Dan Brown compared it to the Manichean conflict between Light and Darknes

Chapter III

Angels and Demons & the

Manichean Conflict

3.1 Introduction:

The previous chapter offered an overview about secret societies, conspiracy theory and the relation between science and religion. *Angels and Demons* (2000) was a famous conspiracy thriller representing an eternal war between science and religion. Therefore the third and last chapter will provide at first an evaluation to the novel both as factual and fictional literary work, then it will show how secret societies and their conspiracy, mainly the Illuminati, were represented in the novel. By the end the chapter will provide an analysis of the relation between the conflict of religion and science, with the struggle in Manichaeism between Light and Darkness and show how Dan Brown linked the Manichean Darkness to religion and the Manichean Light to science.

3.2 *Angels and Demons* Fiction or Fact:

A great plot was constructed by Dan Brown in *Angels and Demons* (2000), and was stated as one of the best page turner ever. He invented incredible plots with many entanglements and subplots, which were all resolved by the end. Creating many climax within the story with a dramatic and unexpected twists, graphics deaths, and a disguised villain, made readers curious about knowing the information they have in hand concerning the struggle between faith and science and the old age secret society the Illuminati. Thus, it was noteworthy to assess the novel from one side as fiction and as fact from the other.

3.2.1 Evaluating the *Angels and Demons* as Fiction:

The language of suspense writing by Dan Brown was excellent; beside his description of each and everything, Laboratory, to library and the secret passageways,

Vatican, etc. Reading each and every line of this book was a thrilling experience, due to the fictional events where the author distorted facts to produce such a great novel.

The Illuminati in the novel was a perfect villain, since it was known that they had always contradicted religion and its teachings. In the novel Dan Brown presented an event called la *Purga* where the Catholic Church was alleged to have branded four scientists with a sign of a cross to pure their bodies from their sins, which took place in 1668 (Brown 108). This event was purely imaginative and historically inaccurate, created by Dan Brown to raise excitement in the souls of readers. Although science and theology had always been in war and the church persecuted scientists, things did not get to the point of killing people publically, because doing so would only lean people more to science and make the church lose its control over them.

Despite the fact that *Angels and Demons* was a fictional novel, the historical facts provided in it were undeniable hence an assessment of the novel as factual one was needed.

3.2.2 Assessing the Novel as Fact:

The factual secret history of Rome made it the dream city of conspiracy writers. Being full of churches and known to people for its religious connections, Dan Brown brilliantly used this location and coordinated it to his story. Moreover, the author used other factual information that existed and still existing such as the brotherhood of the Illuminati. As Dan Brown stated by the very beginning of his literary work *Angels and Demons* in the author's note:

References to all works of art, tombs, tunnels, and architecture in Rome are entirely factual (as are their exact locations). They can still be seen today. The brotherhood of the Illuminati is also factual. The brotherhood of the Illuminati is also factual. (Brown 4)

The use of such elements added intrigue, credibility and importance to the novel. The struggle relation in the novel between faith and reason was factual and fitted in the novel, because Dan Brown had produced rich characters that present extreme opposition. Maximilian Kohler, the director of CERN⁸, that considered religion as evil and the reason behind this hatred was formed after a personal experience and not an academic conclusion. He dedicated himself to pure science and believed that it provide answers to all questions. As he told Langdon: “Science has now proven those Gods to be false idols. Soon all Gods will be proven to be false idols. Science has now provided answers to almost every question man can ask” (21) on the other hand, the Camerlengo was a religious man who had always rejected science implicitly, yet progressively disclosed himself to be skeptical about the scientific researches, that were not submitted to the authority of the church.

Angels and Demons was a fictional piece of literature based on historical-factual information, in which Dan Brown tried to entertain and enlighten readers with the history of the world and in order to give a clear understanding concerning the nature of the scientific and religious Dan Brown used secret societies.

⁸CERN a French abbreviation for *ConceilEuropéen pour la RechercheNucléaire*for English: European Organization for Nuclear Research it is a European research organization that operates the largest particle physics laboratory in the world. Established in 1954, Geneva.

3.3 Secret societies in *Angels and demons*:

In literature, secret societies gained novelists interest and were reflected in their writings. Dan Brown the most famous conspiracy writer in the 20th and 21st century was one of these novelists, with his novels revolving around great historical secret societies. Brown's novels include, *Angels and Demons* (2000), *The Da Vinci Code* (2003), the main theme portrayed in these novels was the conspiracy organized by different secret societies.

AnsamYaroubKhyoon in his journal *Secret Societies in Dan Brown's Angels and Demons* (2000) (2016) stated that *Angels and Demons* is opulent with the most remarkable world order societies known to mankind, among them the Illuminati.

Angels and Demons depicted the struggle between science and religion, more precisely the Roman Catholic Church and the oldest secret society in the world the Illuminati, which according to the novel its main aim was destroying the Vatican City as a revenge for the murder and repression of science before the age of Enlightenment. As long as the Illuminati were scientists, they were considered as adversaries to religion, thus Dan Brown used them in his novel in order to give an accurate presentation to the eternal war between scientists and religious.

3.3.1 The illuminati as reflected in the novel

Angels and Demons served as a gateway to secret societies mainly the illuminati; Dan Brown enriches his readers with a detailed background of this secret society providing them historical facts. According to the novel the Illuminati was a group of scientists, astronomers, mathematicians, physicists etc, extremely secretive in their acts in order to keep safe from the tyranny of the church as Langdon explained "Of course, the Illuminati were hunted ruthlessly by the Catholic Church. Only

through rites of extreme secrecy did the scientists remain safe” (Brown 25) so their secrecy was because the church refused any scientific truth and killed anyone who support or claim such a truth. As Kohler states “were murdered by the church for revealing scientific truths. Religion has always persecuted science.” (Brown 25)

As the scientists kept challenging the church by providing knowledge to people, opposed to the church who wanted to keep them in ignorance by hiding any scientific truth that could serve in furthering human understanding, the church could not handle the illuminati’s acts and became more violent and captured four illuminati members branded their chest alive with the symbol of the cross then pitched their bodies in the streets of Rome to warn anyone who try to join them. As Langdon told Kohler: “Then the scientists were brutally murdered, their dead bodies dropped in the streets of Rome as a warning to others thinking of joining the Illuminati.” (27)

In fact, the Illuminati were not against religion neither they were evil, what made them so was the church’s ruthless behaviors towards science. They were trying to unify science and religion in order to have a clear understanding and proving God’s existence, despite the clarification given by the famous Catholic scientist Galileo who claimed that “science did not undermine the existence of God, but rather reinforced it.” (26) the church refused science and the unification, because doing so belittle the Catholic Church and make people question the Bible and teachings of the church, and lose their influence over people if they believed the scientific ideas. The church wanted to remain the lone source of knowledge and God’s understanding as it has always been “the sole vessel through which man could understand God”. (26)

Brown continued stating that despite the cruelty of the church, the brotherhood fled to Rome and kept meeting secretly in a church they named “the church of

Illumination.” (26) Different groups who suffered from the inhumanity of the Catholic Church, beside other secret societies joined the Illuminati. So they became stronger the thing that frightened the church. As Langdon maintained:

The Illuminati went deep underground, where they began mixing with other refugee groups fleeing the Catholic purges—mystics, alchemists, occultists, Muslims, Jews. Over the years, the Illuminati began absorbing new members. A new Illuminati emerged. A darker Illuminati. A deeply anti-Christian Illuminati. They grew very powerful, employing mysterious rites, deadly secrecy, vowing someday to rise again and take revenge on the Catholic Church. Their power grew to the point where the Church considered them the single most dangerous anti-Christian force on earth. The Vatican denounced the brotherhood as Shaitan.(Brown27)

As mentioned in the novel and after decades of oppression the Illuminati; without prior warning they reappeared, as promised, for retaliation

The Illuminati, like a serpent from the forgotten depths of history, had risen and wrapped themselves around an ancient foe. No demands. No negotiation. Just retribution.Demonically simple.Squeezing.A revenge 400 years in the making. It seemed that after centuries of persecution, science had bitten back. (113)

Thus the conspiracy of the Illuminati against the Roman Catholic Church began.

3.3.2 Conspiracy of the Illuminati:

The storyline of *Angels and Demons* revolved around the conspiracy of the Illuminati against the Roman Catholic Church. The oldest secret society in history as mentioned before came to the surface again for vengeance as promised, and the only

way to do so was by plotting back against the church the same way it did in 1668 by capturing scientists and branding their bodies, claiming that this would purge their bodies from sins. (Brown 107) the Illuminati detained the four preferred Cardinals for the papacy and owed to brand their chests as a vendetta for the spirits of their fellows, as the messenger of the Illuminati stated: “Yes. So we shall do the same. Quid pro quo. Consider it symbolic retribution for our slain brothers your four cardinals will die one every hour starting at eight.” (108)

Beside killing the Cardinals the same way the freethinkers were killed, the brotherhood of the Illuminati threatened to blow up the holy city, the Vatican during one of the significant events within the church. As mentioned by the beginning of the novel the Theo-phisist⁹ Leonardo Vetra was killed because of his invention “the antimatter”¹⁰. Throughout the novel the reader recognize that the eye of Vetra was cut out by the killer in order to steal the dreadfully dangerous antimatter and place it in the Vatican to bring it down. Vetra believed that his invention would serve as a link between science and religion, the thing that had always frightened the church.

The notion of the long-established opposition of the church to science in the novel is also a result of betrayal feeling which pushed the Camerlengo Carlo Ventresca (the temporary Pope) who referred to himself as Janus¹¹, to conspire against the church and hire a killer for revenge under the guise of the Illuminati, which was revealed by the end of the novel. Carlo was very faithful he was the son of God as his

⁹A priest and physicist at the same time

¹⁰Molecules atoms opposed to the matter that composed the universe. Once the antimatter comes in contact with matter, it annihilates it and cause awful damages.

¹¹A Greek God gates transitions beginnings and endings, having two heads, thus he could see forward and backward. He was believed to be the doorkeeper, of the heavens.

mother told him whenever he asked about his father “God is your father, now,” she would always reply. “You are a child of the church.” (Brown 127)

The Camerlengo was against science, he believed that it only produce weapons that hurt humanity, he had always blamed science for the death of his mother (Brown395) the main reason behind the conspiracy of the Camerlengo using the Illuminati against the Pope was his support to the discovery of Vetra, instead of refusing it as supposed from any man of church, he showed his support to science claiming that it gave him the thing that he thought he would never have. As he told the Camerlengo: “I owe a deep debt to science,” the Pope had replied. “Something I have hidden my entire life. Science gave me a gift when I was a young man. A gift I have never forgotten.” (359) the gift was a child. Carlo Ventresca stood horrified in front of this astonishing fact; the Pope lied to people and God, he did not keep his word and broke his promise of never getting married. As the Camerlengo screamed: “But he fathered a child! He broke his sacred vow of celibacy!”

It is commonly known that Popes must be celibate and childless, because anyone who would join the priesthood must be free from the cares of personal family, detach himself from the world and be completely devoted to the church, as Paul the Apostle or Saint Paul stated in his *New testament The First Epistle to the Corinthians*: “I want you to be free from anxieties. The unmarried man is anxious about the affairs of the Lord, how to please the Lord; but the married man is anxious about the affairs of the world, how to please his wife, and his interests are divided.” (1 Corinthians 7: 32-33) thus, anyone who will to serve the church must be free from any other interests and vow his dedication for it and never break the oath. Nevertheless the Pope betrayed the church God and people by fathering a child, Carlo Ventresca could not accept his unfaithfulness; he believed that promises must be kept especially those

made for God. As his mother always told him: “A promise to God is the most important promise of all. Never break a promise to God.” (127) the Camerlengo tried to rectify the situation, and under the guise of the Illuminati, with his evil acts he spread fear among people in order to bring them back to the church and retrieve their faith. As he stated: “Nothing unites hearts like the presence of evil. Burn a church and the community rises up, holding hands, singing hymns of defiance as they rebuild. Look how they flock tonight. Fear has brought them home. Forge modern demons for modern man.” (Brown 358)

In fact, the pope was conscious concerning his vow and never broke it, he believed that God come before everything. His support to science was due to the fact that it offered what the church what the church outlawed for him (having a child), without betraying God or breaking his promise of celibacy through insemination. As Mortati stated:

The Pop when he was just a priest had fallen in love with a young nun. Both of them had taken vows of celibacy and never even considered breaking their covenant with God (...) she had just read an article about a new miracle of science-a process by which two people, without ever having sexual relations, could have a child. She sensed this was a sign from God. The priest could see the happiness in her eyes and agreed. A year later she had a child through the miracle of artificial insemination. (Brown 363)

The Illuminati in *Angels and Demons* was used as conspiratorial secret society by Ventresca in order to reach his objectives. The hatred that the Camerlengo got toward science led him to use the scientific invention in his devilish plan. The Illuminati were not evil they were only a pacific scientists seeking freedom of thought

and the church represented them as evil cult trying to dominate the world, while it was the church who was evil, it killed people and persecuted them for its own interest.

In his literary work *Angels and Demons* Dan Brown sought to represent the complicated reality of the struggle between science and religion as it really was, and mainly distinguishing the good from the evil.

3.4 The Manichean Conflict of Science and Religion in the Novel:

The relationship of science and religion has been highly debated; it is generally supposed that science is based upon reason and skeptical query while religion is based on faith and high power. The difference between their basis resulted in a kind of disagreement between them. Since the end of 16th century, science and religion are having many struggles in which theologians and scientists had different beliefs and incompatible ideas. As stated by the protagonist of the novel Robert Langdon a Harvard professor of religious symbology stated: “Since the beginning of history, a deep rift has existed between science and religion” (25)

Powers in Manichaeism and in *Angels and Demons* tried to cease the existence of one another, the desirous feeling of the world of Darkness in Manichaeism to light pushed it to conspire against the world of Light and invade it, by the same token the catholic church in angels and demons, to be more precise the Camerlengo through his conspiratorial plan attempted to withdraw science from the world.

Brown portrayed the conflict between faith and reason similarly to the struggle in the Manichean religion between the two contradictory forces of Good and Evil. According to the novel scientists were the good angels trying to enlighten people and provide answers to any kind of inquiry human beings have in mind, while religion

was the evil demons seeking power and authority, and condemning those who disagreed with their absurd religious thoughts.

3.4.1 The Good Angels of Science:

The science of *Angels and Demons* was compatible to the Good of Manichaeism, which provide enlightenment to people helping them in understanding their origin and protecting them from the absurd teachings of the church and its tyranny.

Brown used the Manichean doctrine of Good and Evil, associating Good with science due to their Good intention towards the existence of human beings. In the light of *The Gospel According to Dan Brown* (2006) Jeff Dunn and Craig Bubeck mentioned that according to the novel science had nothing harmful either against humans nor religion, similar to the Good Manichean which its main aim was protecting the Kingdom of Light from Evil and putting an end to it without any trauma, it tried to provide knowledge and hope for people. (Dunn and Bubeck 138)

Despite his Catholic background Robert Langdon, he believed that science served humans more than religion did, “He had always respected the power of faith, the benevolence of churches” (Brown 76), but he always felt that faith would be an obstacle to his scientific mind. Despite his religious backdrop Robert Langdon preferred science and considered it as the sole provider of explanation to those who are seeking answers concerning the world around them, he argued that science would make an end to the mythical sacred wars that were caused by the different dogmas of people and ignorance. As Manicheans wanted to cease the existence of Evil and prevent it from extending and sharing his devilish deeds in the world of light, Langdon also held that religion must have a rest and provide science the chance to

over speak, otherwise if religion continued preaching its mythical teachings the world would be full of illiteracy. Showing his empathy to the science or the Illuminati Langdon stated that:

The brotherhood held that the superstitious dogma spewed forth by the church was mankind's greatest enemy. They feared that if religion continued to promote pious myth as absolute fact, scientific progress would halt, and mankind would be doomed to an ignorant future of senseless holy wars. (Brown 29, 30)

Churches had always claimed that faith would protect people; however Langdon considered this notion as a completely wrong one. Faith never protected people if it did it would have protected the cardinals from death. The good science had always been a benevolent to mankind it facilitated everything offering helpful ways for living and reducing the necessity of God. As Langdon stated:

Faith does not protect you. Medicine and airbags... Those are the things that protect you. God does not protect you. Intelligence protects you. Enlightenment. Put your faith in something with tangible results. How long has it been since someone walked on water? Modern miracles belong to science. Computers, vaccines, space stations... Even the Divine miracle of creation. Matter from nothing... In a lab. Who needs God? No! Science is God! (Brown120)

In Manichaeism everything good emerged from the world of light such as wisdom, truth, comfort etc, so based on this notion Dan Brown linked the world of Light with enlightenment, facts and answers given by science. As Vittoria stated: The mindfind answers" (358)

The same way Dan Brown connected the Manichean world of Light to science he related its opposite, the world of Darkness, to the old enemy of science that was religion. Religion in the novel was depicted as the Manichean Evil.

3.4.2 The Evil Demons of Religion:

The emergence of the age of reason or the Enlightenment during the 16th century, people started getting aware about the devilish nature of religion, which once they considered as the most important blessing thing in their lives. The imposed authority of the church among people and oppression to scientist who were seeking freedom of thoughts made human beings doubtful about it and drove them away from it. Jeff Dunn and Craig Bubeck referred religion in Dan Brown's piece of literature as the Manichean evil they believed that, the Manichean influence was omnipresent since the author connected "the familiar conflict between good and evil in Manichaeism with the conflict between science and religion". (Jeff Dunn and Craig Bubeck 136)

Angels and Demons opened with the mysterious and outrageous death of the Theo-physicist Leonardo Vetra in his laboratory, because his belief that science and religion can be compatible through his new discovery the thing that caused annoyance to the Camerlengo. Religion had always had hatred toward science and tried to vanquish it through its diabolical conspiratorial plans. In Manichaeism, when Evil discovered the existence of another essence which is the world of Light felt envious for it and tried to corrupt it and seize it. Dan Brown dropped this idea in his novel and linked it to religion.

Since the dawn of history, religion was connected to the higher power playing a prominent role in defining culture of society and providing knowledge as claimed

by churches, the reason behind this importance was their belief that only divinity or spirituality can add significance to the life of worldly people and refused any challenging power which try to prove their fallacies, mainly science. As the Camerlengo stated: “How can the church condemn that which makes logical sense to our minds! How can we decry that which is now the very foundation of our society!” (Brown 352) this idea had been proven to be especially true amongst persecuted peoples by giving them a sense of hope despite the terrible conditions of persecution, for others, especially scientist who found other ways for understanding their existence rejected this idea and considered science as their enemy defining it as a cancer. As Maximilian Kohler told Robert Langdon: “One does not need to have cancer to analyse its symptoms” (18)

Manicheans referred to bad acts as Evil deeds, as stated before Evil was associated with corruption, conspiracy and disturbance seeking force and control, theses criteria were all connected to religion in *Angels and Demons*. The churches corrupted the minds of people by remaining them ignorant through their teachings, and made them live in eternal discomfort and conspired against them for the sake of power and authority. Thus, The thirstiness of religion for force made the clergies allow to themselves any act, arguing that they can do whatever because they knew more than anyone, hence the Camerlengo schemed to revenge from the Pope because he was supporting science and accepted the idea of using science in reaching God, something that the church would never accept. As he told Vitoria Vetra: “Reaching to the modern world. Searching for new paths to God.” (228) alike the world of Darkness in Manichaeism which conspired against the world of light and tried eliminate it and replace it with Evil particles, the Camerlengo killed the four preferred cardinals who according to him would not serve the church in the proper way, and

elect a suitable Pope who would always reject science and consider it as an enemy of the church, and only through their murder they would restore faith and bring people back to churches. As narrated in the novel:

The camerlegno turned to him, surprised by the pain in his voice. Certainly *Mortati* could understand. Headlines carried science's miracles every day. How long had it been for religion? Centuries? Religion needed a miracle! Something to awaken a sleeping world Bring them back to the path of righteousness. Restore faith. The *preferiti* were not leaders anyway, they were transformers-liberals prepared to embrace the new world and abandon the old ways! This was the only way. (Brown 358)

Maximilian Kohler was denied treatment by his extremely religious parents who believed his disease was a test from God and he would protect him, the thing that forced him use a wheelchair for his entire life and live handicapped. As told in the novel:

Frau and Herr Kohler would not allow it. They did not believe in medicine. Who were they to interfere with God's master plan? They prayed harder. After all, God had blessed them with this boy, why would God take the child away? His mother whispered to Max to be strong. She explained that God was testing him... like the Bible story of Abraham . . . a test of his faith. (305)

Everything bad and harming was associated in Manichaeism to Evil, in Angels and Demons Dan Brown pictured science in the same way. Distress, misery, pain, suffering etc was tightly linked to religion. Maximilian Kohler was killed by religion when it deprived him from walking; making him preferring dying than living in the situation he had reached, due to the faith of his parents. As he told the Camerlengo:

“Death would be welcome relief from the misery your faith has put me through since I was a boy” (Brown 351)

Similarly to the Manichean Evil which caused the disturbance of the world, religion in *Angels and Demons* ruined many lives of people, via imposing certain irrational beliefs and controlling their lives and played a major role in making their existence uncomfortable.

3.5 Conclusion:

In brief, the chapter showed how Dan Brown used historical facts and manipulated them for the sake of creating a fictional piece of literature, making the reader wonder whereas the novel was factual or fictional. Then, it discussed the reflection of the Illuminati in *Angels and Demons* and how Dan brown incarnated them in his theme, where they were used by the Camerlengo as a guise in order to accomplish his evil goals. Finally, the chapter explained the nature of the clash between science and religion and how did Dan Brown connect such bitter opposition with the Manichean realms Light and Darkness, which by their turn were in a constant conflict

General Conclusion

General Conclusion

The present research paper undertook the study of *Angels and Demons* by Dan Brown as a corpus for the sake of studying Dan Brown's dropping of the beliefs of Manichaeism in his novel and the connection he made between its conflict and the conflict of science and religion.

Based on what had been exposed in the present paper it can be said that Dan Brown made a connection between the Manichean conflict between Light and Darkness and the conflict between the Roman Catholic Church and science. He associated science with the Manichean World of Light "Good" for the criteria shared between them, both were benevolent; on the other hand, he related the Manichean world of Darkness "Evil" with religion due to the fact that both of them were malevolence.

Manichaeism was a dualistic religion divided the world between Good and Evil principles basing its doctrine on the existence of two world: the world of Light and the world of Darkness which were in a constant conflict due to the conspiracy made by the world of Darkness "Evil" against the world of Light "Good". Manicheans understood the concept of "Good" as shining, beautiful, benevolence and good deeds; on the other side they viewed the notion of "Evil" as evil acts causing turmoil in the world. The notion of Good and Evil was highly present in modern literature more precisely in Dan Brown's literature aiming to make a distinction between Good and Evil for his readers.

Damaging and illegal plans done by powerful organization for personal ends was called Conspiracy and it was portrayed in literature, where authors based their works on the fictionalisation of facts which harden the distinction between fact and

fiction. Conspiracy and secrecy was generally attributed to secret societies mainly the Illuminati that were persecuted by the Catholic Church during Enlightenment period due to fact that they questioned religion and had a rational thinking. The Catholic Church had always rejected science, the reason which drove scientists to have hatred toward it and consider it as a bad thing for humanity, which must be removed and replaced with the good science.

Dan Brown depends in his writing on the style of fictionalising facts. *Angels and Demons* was a factional novel i.e. a fiction based on facts. The focal point of this research was shedding light on Dan Brown's linking of the Manichean struggle with the struggle of science and the Catholic Church. The author depicted in his novel the secret society of the Illuminati and the Catholic Church as conflicting adversaries, ascribing the Catholic Church to the Manichean Evil and Illuminati/ science to the Manichean Good. The conspiracy done by Evil against Good in Manichaeism was directly linked to the conspiracy of the Catholic Church against science through which it attempted to destroy the Church (by the end it was actually saved) under the guise of the Illuminati, so the cruelty of the church, its demonic acts toward scientific scholars and its desire to possessing power, Dan Brown referred to it as the Manichean Evil world of Darkness which was very desirous for light, thus it conspired against the world of Light and stole some light particles causing harm and disturbance to the world order, while science which in the novel was trying to make a link between science and religion through a new discovery was portrayed as the Manichean Good since it was aiming to provide knowledge, wisdom, clear understanding to the world's existence and comfort to the world, was portrayed as the Manichean Good world of Light.

Although this research study attempted to answer some inquiries and enlighten some ambiguities about the discussed topic, there still some analysis to be done. Different research that can be diverse and rich can be tackled such as an analysis of the relation between science and religion and whether they can be compatible, or even an investigation of the same issue presented in the this research for the sake of finding different resolution.

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Appendices

Appendix One

The Author's Biography

Dan Brown an American author born in 22 June 1964, he is son of a mathematics teacher and a church organist, Brown was raised on a prep school campus where he developed a fascination with the paradoxical interplay between science and religion. These themes eventually formed the backdrop for his books. He is a graduate of Amherst College and Phillips Exeter Academy, where he later returned to teach English before focusing his attention full time to writing. He is the author of numerous #1 bestselling novels, including *Angels and Demons* has become one of the bestselling novels of all time as well as the subject of heated debate among readers and scholars. Brown's novels are published in 52 languages around the world with 200 million copies in print.

In 2005, Brown was named one of the 100 Most Influential People in the World by TIME Magazine, whose editors credited him with “keeping the publishing industry afloat; renewed interest in Leonardo Da Vinci and early Christian history; spiking tourism to Paris and Rome; a growing membership in secret societies; the ire of Cardinals in Rome; eight books denying the claims of the novel and seven guides to read along with it; a flood of historical thrillers; and a major motion picture franchise.”

Appendix Two

The Synopsis of the book *Angels and Demons*

The novel juxtaposes science and religion in a way that brings the two concepts into conflict with each other. The story begins with a murder at the CERN laboratory and the theft of a container of antimatter which, if not recovered within twenty-four hours, will explode. The container has been taken to Vatican City by a secret society known as the Illuminati. Landon and Vittoria, the daughter of the physicist who was murdered, travel to Vatican City to investigate the container's disappearance. Ventresca, a member of the Swiss Guard, who also worked with the previous Pontiff, joins the pair.

Langdon's initial investigation in Rome uncovers the murders of four cardinals killed in ways that mimic the four elements: earth, wind, water, and fire. He discovers each of the victims have been branded with an ambigram associated with an element. Vittoria is taken hostage during the investigation, and Langdon, still pursuing the missing canister, is determined to save his colleague as well. He eventually finds her in St. Peter's Basilica. While in the process of rescuing her, he hears Ventresca's panic ridden screams and discovers that Ventresca, too, has been branded by the Illuminati. During this flurry of events, Kohler, the first to discover the murder at the CERN, is believed to be a member of the secret society and is gunned down. As he dies, Kohler gives Langdon a videotape, pleading with him to make it public.

Little time remains as Langdon and Vittoria follow Ventresca into the catacombs to find the canister resting atop the tomb of St. Peter. With the antimatter in hand, they board a helicopter, eager to get the container away from the densely populated area surrounding St. Peter's Basilica. With only minutes remaining before

the antimatter explodes, Landon and Ventresca parachute from the helicopter as the canister explodes harmlessly above them.

Langdon regains consciousness and finds himself in the hospital. He takes the videotape from his jacket pocket. He views the contents, shocked by what he finds. The videotape reveals that Ventresca, also a camerlengo, branded himself with the Illuminati insignia, confessing shortly after that his real name is Janus. He orchestrated the chain of events that lead to the catastrophe that nearly destroyed thousands of lives and Vatican City. His involvement in the conspiracy is further exacerbated by the knowledge that he murdered the Pope with the powerful anticoagulant heparin as retaliation for the discovery that the Pope had fathered a child. Langdon flees the hospital and returns to the Vatican.

The link between science and religion is further illustrated by the meeting the Pope had just before the novel begins with Vetra, who was convinced that anti-matter was capable of bridging the gap between science and the church. The Pope supported the idea, revealing that science allowed him to have a son through the process of artificial insemination. Without knowing the full story, Ventresca, assuming the Pope had broken his vow of chastity, devised an intricate plot to rectify the situation. Under the guise of an Illuminati master, Ventresca hired an killer to kill Vetra and steal the antimatter; the act that instigated the chain of events depicted in the novel. The theft of the antimatter, as well as the valiant act of retrieving it just in time to save the city, was a desperate attempt to unite the struggling Catholic Church. The involvement of the Illuminati was another ploy orchestrated by Ventresca to misdirect Langdon and the Church from his own misdeeds. The Dean of the College of Cardinals, upon

learning of Ventresca's plot, reveals that Ventresca is the son of the recently murdered Pope, having been conceived via artificial insemination with a nun.

Distraught by the guilt of having killed his own father, Ventresca douses himself in oil and lights himself on fire. A crowd of onlookers in St. Peter's Square witnesses the horrifying scene. Ventresca's ashes are recovered and placed inside an urn that is placed inside his father's sarcophagus. Mortati, the former Dean of the College of Cardinals is unanimously elected Pope, while Langdon and Vittoria leave for their hotel. As the novel concludes, the last brand, the Illuminati Diamond, is gifted to Langdon with the caveat he return it to the Vatican in his will.