

The Thriller Genre In Dan Brown's Novel Angels And Demons

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ABSTRACT

Thriller is a genre of fiction in which heroes are pitted against villains determined to destroy them, their country, or the stability of the world. This genre is often associated with adventure and detective fiction. Thriller genre uses suspense, tension, and excitement as their main elements. It is mostly characterized by an atmosphere of menace, violence, and murder. This genre includes sub-genres, which may include elements of other genres. A wide ranging conspiracy involving governments, terrorists or secret brotherhood is also what makes a good thriller. Dan Brown is not a new-comer to this genre. Each of his novels includes intricate plots, and intriguing conspiracy theories with breathless, edge of the seat action. Brown's novels introduces collection of codes, puzzles, anagrams, ambigrams, and messages hidden in famous scientific discoveries and Art works, as new thrilling devices.

CHAPTER ONE**Dan Brown's Life and Work**

Dan Brown is a well-known American writer of thriller. He was born on June 22, 1964, the eldest of three children. He grew up in the campus of Phillips Exeter Academy in New Hampshire. His father Richard, a teacher and co-author of a series of mathematics textbooks that became recommended in the United States, joined this faculty and brought his wife who had been trained as a church organist and student of sacred music, with him, two years before Dan was born. Brown became a student at the Academy, which is, according to Lisa Rogak,

a secret society all its own, where new students quickly learn that the culture is steeped in an Us versus Them mentality. The students and faculty are insiders and people in the

rest of the world become, by definition, outsiders. What goes on within its wall is largely unknown and unnoticed by the outsiders, and the insiders like to keep it that way.¹

The Brown family was active on campus, and Richard and Connie encouraged their children to balance educational pursuits and physical activity every day. "I grew up in a house-hold where riddles and codes were just part of the way we had fun," said Dan Brown, "I also grew up in a house of mathematics, music, language, codes and ciphers really are the fusion of all those languages."² He adds "in our childhood on Christmas morning where most kids would find their presents under the tree, my siblings and I might find a treasure map with codes that we would follow from room to room and eventually find our presents hidden somewhere else in the house."³ Later, he

fueled his novels with treasure hunts, arguing that "the cracking of the codes is what accelerates the readers through the pages."⁴

Lisa Rogak states that one of Phillips Exeter's aims is to create students who are well-rounded by introducing each student to as many different disciplines and topics as possible across science, arts, literature, and sports. She sees that Brown took this lesson to heart, "which later became evident in the numerous disciplines he incorporated into his novels-was that the best thing to aim for in life was to become a Renaissance man."⁵ D. M. Brown adds

Exeter Academy is the home of the Harkness method, a style of teaching named for philanthropist Edward Harkness. Classes are quite small..., and instruction consists of open discussion between teacher and students while seated around a table.... One can easily imagine how this style of teaching encourages students to challenge accepted ideas. Perhaps these classrooms discussions marked the beginning of Dan's free-thinking, unconventional style.⁶

In 1985, while he was a student at Amherst College, he spent the school year abroad in Seville, Spain, where he joined art history course at the University of Seville. Brown comments on this experience

this art course covered the entire history of World Art-

from the Egyptians to Jackson Pollock. The professor's slide presentations included images ranging from the pyramids, religious icons, renaissance painting and sculpture, all the way through to the pop artists of modern times. This course opened my eyes to the concept of art as 'communication' between artist and viewer. The artist's language, I learned, was often symbolism and metaphor.... The course was a chronology of art history, and I took a specific interest in the renaissance masters of Bernini, Michelangelo, Raphael, and Leonardo DaVinci which are loaded with hidden symbolic meaning.⁷

In an interview with Dan Brown, the interviewer asked him "What was the book that most influenced your life?" Dan replied that it was Madeleine L' Engle's classic, *A Wrinkle Time*. "Her mesmerizing concept of tesseract got me thinking of our universe in a multidimensional way."⁸ The second book was Sydney Sheldon's *Doomsday Conspiracy*. He commented "I read the first page... And then the next... And then the next. Several hours later, I finished the book and thought, I can do that. Thus inspired to become a writer of thrillers."⁹ For Brown, writing is a discipline, much like playing musical instrument. He explains the way his novels were written

I have followed a very similar approach in researching and then writing each of my four novels. The first step is to select a theme that I find particularly intriguing, this is generally the "big idea." Therefore I choose a subject which is not black and white, but rather contains a gray area. The ideal topic has no clear right and wrong, no definite good and evil, and makes for great debate. I keep myself interested by writing about things that interest me. For me, the "must have" themes include codes, puzzles and treasure hunts, secretive organizations, and academic lectures on obscure topics.¹⁰

Found that much of the data on the National Security Agency was unclassified and in the public domain, Brown did all the research and background reading for his first novel *Digital Fortress* (1989), a thriller in which the hero finds himself on the run through a landscape of ancient Moorish towers, and the cathedral of Seville in an attempt to find out where the unbreakable code is hidden and what that secret formula is? The novel brings the art of cryptography¹¹ to public attention.

Subsequently, Brown started with his first Robert Langdon story, *Angels and Demons* (2000), a "page-turner" thriller which deals with the idea of the

conflict between science and religion. The novel adapted the historical fact that the Illuminati, "a powerful and mysterious brotherhood – long thought to be defunct – that is bent on the destruction of the Catholic Church"¹² is still active. One important aspect of this novel is the employment of the art of ambigrams¹³ and bring it to public attention.

Angels and Demons, is followed by Brown's scientific thriller *Deception Point* (2001). Brown's fascination with intricate science serves him well in this novel. D. M. Brown sees that "although Dan had delved into the history of art and religion for *Angels and Demons*, the background of *Deception Point* was purely political and scientific... It's a fast read, and every bit as thrilling as Dan's other books... It lacks, however, the warmth and historical context of the Robert Langdon novels."¹⁴ Lisa Rogak illustrates that *Deception Point* like Brown's two earlier novels

would revolve around a secret society: NASA. And like the Vatican, the feature organization in *Angels and Demons*, NASA is one of the most covert secret societies in the world, while also one of the most public. "For me, writing about clandestine material keeps me engaged in the project," he said. "Because a novel can take upwards of a year to write, I need to be constantly learning as I write, or I lose interest."¹⁵

Then comes his religiously oriented thriller novel, *The Da Vinci*

Code (2003). In an interview, Brown was asked "the sell line for your book mentions a greatest conspiracy of the past 2000 years, what is this conspiracy?" Brown's answer was: "Art historians agree that Da Vinci's paintings contain hidden levels of meaning that go well beneath the surface of the paint. This idea excited me as a potential device. *The Da Vinci Code* has taken a lot of this information and put it forward in a different genre-that of a work of fiction-a thriller."¹⁶

In 2009, Brown's third Robert Langdon story was published under the title *The Lost Symbol*. After being in Rome, then in Paris, Langdon finds himself this time in a mystery on the United States Soil. Dan comments "the next Robert Langdon novel... is set deep within the oldest fraternity in history... the enigmatic brotherhood of the Mason."¹⁷

Thinking that people enjoy questing, especially trying to stay a step ahead of the protagonist by deciphering the clues along the way, Brown loaded his thrillers with puzzles, secret, codes, treasure hunts. He states "in each of my books, the treasure hunt is an object in *Digital Fortress* it is a gold ring; in *Angels and Demons*, it is antimatter, in *The Da Vinci Code*, it is the Holy Grail."¹⁸

Thus by blending tantalizing bits of information as art, science, and religion into provocative puzzles, Brown pulls readers into the plots of his novels, making them partners in the hero discoveries and danger as he says "researching and writing about secretive topics helps remind me how fun it is to spy into unseen worlds, and it

motivates me to try to give the reader that same experience."¹⁹

"I think," Brown comments "one reason my books have found mainstream success is that they are written from a skeptic point of view."²⁰ One of Dan Brown's greatest accomplishment as a writer is his uncanny ability to blur the line between fact and fiction, leaving his readers perplexed whether what they read is fact or fiction. John Helfers sees that "the author turns reality on its head so plausibly and so challengingly that it becomes impossible to finish a Dan Brown novel and not start a quest to find the truth behind the fiction."²¹ Time Magazine named him one of the one hundred most influential people in the world. Taylor illustrates "Why dose Dan Brown base the plots of his novels on these often controversial books? Probably because 'alternative history' books offer the reader the thrill of subversive revelation: 'they didn't teach this in school' factor."²² For example, his novel *The Da Vinci Code* plays fast and loose with history, posing puzzling riddles while challenging beliefs in the canon of Scripture, the Church, and Christianity. This boldness to deal with controversial issues leads the interviewer James kaplan to ask Brown, "Are you religious?" Brown's answer was:

I was raised Episcopalian, and I was very religious as a kid. Then in eighth or ninth grade I studied astronomy, cosmology, and the origins of the universe. I remember saying to a minster, I don't get it. I read a book that said there

was an explosion known as the Big Bang, but here it says God created Heaven and Earth and the animals in seven days, which is right? Unfortunately, the response I got was, Nice boys don't ask that question. A light went off, and I said the Bible does not make sense. Science makes much more sense to me. And I just gravitated away from religion.²³

This accident is what makes Brown intend to write his novels in a way that makes readers question their beliefs and open their eyes to religion, adopting Napoleon Bonaparte's words, "what is history, but a fable agreed upon?" And Leonardo Da Vinci's words "many have made a trade of delusions and false miracles, deceiving the stupid multitude." "Blinding ignorance does mislead us, O! wretched mortals, open your eyes."²⁴ He also offers glimpse into realms of knowledge that most readers know little or nothing about, and his story lines entice readers with wealth of fascinating details.

Much criticism centers on Brown's claim that all his novels are based on fact and that all the description of art work, architecture, documents and secret rituals in the novels are accurate.²⁵ In an interview with Matt Lauer on the *Today Show* in September 2009, Brown says "I do something very international and specific in these books. And that is to blend fact and fiction in a very modern and efficient style, to tell a story."²⁶ Thus whether readers enjoy art, politics, science, conspiracies or

adventure, they will find something to satisfy them. Saricks argues that Dan Brown popularized this art of "genre-crossing tendencies."²⁷ It is actually this approach which is the most convenient to approach and analyze the kind of thriller written by Dan Brown since it consists of a metagenre of such sub-genres with unique elements contributed by Brown himself. This is what enabled him to hook the readers.

CHAPTER TWO

ANGELS AND DEMONS

Angels and Demons (2002) is Dan Brown's " first Robert Langdon page turner thriller novel"²⁸ which involves a conspiracy within the Catholic Church. Dan Brown writes about ideas and institutions that have been a fascinating subject for people around the world. It takes readers where only conspiracy theorists and most paranoid Christians usually travel . *Angels and Demons* is a mix of fact and faction that raises important questions about the structure of internal governance and the papal election process of the Roman Catholic Church.²⁹ The book centers on the historical conflict between science and religion, particularly that between the Illuminati and the Roman Catholic Church.³⁰ In an interview with Dan Brown he declared that the story of *Angels and Demons* was derived from a visit to the Vatican City

I was beneath Vatican City touring a tunnel called il-passetto- a concealed passage was used by the early Pope to escape in event of enemy attack. According to the scholar giving the tour, one of the

Vatican most feared ancient enemies was a secret brotherhood known as Illuminati – a cult of early Scientists who had vowed revenge against the Vatican for crimes against scientists like Galileo and Copernicus. I was fascinated by images of this cloaked, anti-religious brotherhood lurking in the cata-combs of Rome. Then, when the scholar added that many modern historians believe the illuminati is still active today and is one of the most powerful unseen forces in global politics.³¹

Brown presumed that "I knew I was hooked. I had to write an Illuminati thriller."³² Yet, despite the fact that the Illuminati founded in Bavaria (1776) was real, yet Brown uses a "fictional imagined Illuminati history to dramatize the real threat posed to the Church by Enlightenment ideas in the seventeen century."³³ To do so he mixes the conspiracy of this secret society with artwork, ancient history, architecture, symbolism, collection of fascinating information about science and religion, puzzles and codes which sometimes he explains and sometimes does not.³⁴ Among the aspects of *Angels and Demons*, which especially intrigued readers is Brown's ability to present fiction that can be read as fact and that promises to unlock the secrets of the history of the universe.³⁵ The novel also raises a lot of sensitive issues that relate to religion. That is why the novel has been severely criticized by the media

and the church, focusing on Brown's claim that he spent years researching the book and fills its pages with extraordinary information. In the author's note to the novel, Brown assures readers that "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." (*Angels and Demons: Author's Note*) This proves that Dan Brown delights in daring to obscure the traditional boundaries of fiction and the real world in order to get his readers question their beliefs and ask them to open their eyes to religion.³⁶ Brown said that "my goal is always to make the characters and the plot be so engaging that the readers don't realize how much they are learning along the way."³⁷ That is why Erin Miller considered Dan Brown's novels as "Educational Thriller," she said "You give me an exciting page turner of a read ,and made me feel like I am learning something."³⁸

The novel begins with a prologue exhibiting a crime. Robert Langdon is awakened by a phone call from Maximilian Kohler, director of CERN, telling him that one of the prominent scientists of CERN has been killed in a brutal way. Langdon flies to Geneva as soon as he received a fax of an image of a naked murdered man lying on his back with a gouged eye and his chest is branded with a mysterious symbol, which Langdon directly recognized as

Iluminati

Langdon is shocked to find proof that the legendary secret society, the illuminati, is alive and murderously active. Then after getting a brief tour at CERN and at the scene of the crime, Langdon and Kohler meet Vittoria Vetra asking her about the supposed reasons that may cause her father, Leonardo Vetra, to be killed in this way. Vittoria who is also a brilliant physicist at CERN, gives them a lecture about hers and her father's private experiment to initiate a large Hadron collider and create in three vials or canisters, the barely visible but extremely destructive antimatter. The goal of this experiment is to rectify science with religion, since

the two sources of knowledge are portrayed as being complimentary – two paths to a common end. By gathering hard scientific evidence that proved the 'Big Bang theory'⁴⁰ which was first proposed by a catholic monk Georges Lemaitre in 1927. Vittoria paused, as though uncertain how to speak the next words my father created a universe... from nothing at all. He devised an experiment, one he hoped would settle one of the most bitter conflicts in

the history of science and religion. Creationism, Vittoria declared. The battle over how the universe came to be. The Bible of course, state that God created the universe,... God said, 'Let there be light,' and everything we see appeared out of vast emptiness. Unfortunately, one of the fundamental laws of physics states that matter cannot be created out of nothing. When Lemaître first proposed the Big Bang Theory," Vittoria continued, "scientists claimed it was utterly ridiculous. Matter, science said, could not be created out of nothing. So, when Hubble shocked the world by scientifically proving the Big Bang was accurate, the church claimed victory, heralding this as *proof* that the Bible was scientifically accurate. The divine truth." "My dad used to wave that in my face every time I had doubts." Langdon read the message: *SCIENCE AND RELIGION ARE NOT AT ODDS. SCIENCE IS SIMPLY TOO YOUNG TO UNDE RSTAND.* "My dad wanted to bring science to a higher level," Vittoria said, "where science supported the concept of God." "He set out to do something no scientist had ever thought

to do. Something that no one has ever had the *technology* to do.” She paused, as though uncertain how to speak the next words. “He designed an experiment to prove Genesis was possible.” “My father created a universe... from nothing at all.” She added that the storage room of their private lab contains larger amount of antimatter in a separate canister, which lately found missing!! (*Angels and Demons*: p. 60)

From there the story speeds up. Receiving a mysterious phone call, Kohler directed Langdon and Vittoria to Roma where they discovered that the Catholic Church is mourning the death of the current Pope and that the most powerful cardinals of the world are holding the scared ceremony of conclave. In time where Vetra's antimatter disappeared only to be hidden somewhere beneath the Vatican City on the eve of the election of a new Pope. Thus, the entire power structure of the Roman Catholic Church is sitting on a time bomb.

A moment later, the phone on Camerlengo Ventresca's desk began to ring. Ventresca, an orphan rescued by the late Pope, who had treated him like a son, asks the phone caller "who in the name of God do you think you are?... The voice announced in an alien cadence "I am a messenger of an ancient brotherhood you have wronged for centuries. I am a messenger of Illuminati." (*Angels and Demons*: p.128) Langdon recognized his accent as

Middle Eastern. The Hassassin, who considered himself descended from notorious group of Arab killers who sought revenge for the deaths of Muslims at the time of Crusades,⁴¹

The church had made some deadly enemies through the years – the Hassassin, the Knight Templar, armies that had been either hunted by the Vatican or betrayed by them.. “What are you saying?” Langdon asked. “That you are going to brand and kill these men in *public*?” “Very good. Of course the press will enjoy it too, I imagine.” We move among your Swiss Guard like ghosts, remove four of your cardinals from within your walls, plan a deadly explosive at the heart of your most sacred shrine... As the killings occur and the victims are found, the media will swarm. By midnight the world will know the Illuminati cause. Then he commented that there is no blackmail. We have no demands. The abolition of the Vatican City is nonnegotiable. We have waited four hundred years for this day. At midnight, your city will be destroyed. (*Angels and Demons*: pp.128–32)

With the meager help of the Swiss Guard, Robert Langdon and Vittoria Vetra have to follow a 400 years old path made by Galileo Galilei, one of the most famous scientists of the Illuminati,

through Rome, trying to track down the conspiracy of old secret brotherhood who apparently is to blame for everything. They must find the canister before it is too late, or the center of Christianity will perish. Together they embark on a frantic hunt through sealed crypts, dangerous catacombs, deserted cathedrals, and the most secretive vault on earth.

The physical aspects of the setting of the book such as works of art, church architecture, fountains, statues make readers familiar with works of Italian renaissance men. Those works include the secrets writings and records of Galileo and the history of religious conflicts within the Vatican."There is a lot of peripheral information that acts not only as a backdrop but also becomes an integral part of the complex twists of the story."⁴² K. S. Carter points out that despite the fact that the novel takes place in modern-day Rome, but the history of the city is living very much hand-in-hand with the present and that Dan Brown weaves them together seamlessly for an adrenaline rush and history lesson rolled into one.⁴³ In his book *Rome: City Guide*, Abigail Hole said that "on this rich stage, Dan Brown's novel *Angels and Demons* unfolds."⁴⁴ Thus, Brown creates a fictional story in an historical setting.

The storyline uses the metaphor of two different Cathedrals: The European Council for Nuclear Research (known by its acronymy, CERN), is the 'Cathedral of Science'. Whereas St. Peter's Basilica in Vatican City is the 'Cathedral of Religion'.⁴⁵ Dan Burstein suggested that CERN and the Vatican City are two different churches and that

they look like two atomic particles, that come smashing into each other as the story progress within its twenty-four hours time clock.

The book starts with the author's note which exposures of what is to come. The claim that all references to work of art, tombs, tunnels and architecture are factual lends an authentic background to the story⁴⁶ and prepares readers that "certain agenda is to be presented."⁴⁷ Mark Shea says that "True, *Angels and Demons* is just a novel, but it gives the impression that its contents are based on serious research."⁴⁸

With the prologue of the brutal murder of the brilliant scientist Leonardo Vetra, the readers are thrown into the middle of the location ,a death scene which later proved to be the most important incidents of the story around it Brown skillfully weaves together the familiar and mysterious into a thriller.⁴⁹ From there on the story is shortly told cinematically as it is interrupted from time to time by flashbacks and "ranking rapidly back and forward over the span of action"⁵⁰ to "perceive the interesting effects that could be obtained by deviating chronological order."⁵¹ This 'time-shift' makes the story loaded with mysteries, leaving each chapter suspended with cliffhanger and questions that came every moment to keep the readers wried right up until the final revelation. Since the novel is written in a third-person omniscient point of view, so this gives Brown a great deal of flexibility to shift focus from chapter to chapter and from character to character, allowing readers to see what multiple characters are doing at relatively the same time, and to

"make connections of causality and irony between widely separated events."⁵² For example ,one chapter might focus on the Hassassin and his actions while another might focus on Langdon and Vittoria.

Despite the fact that Brown mixes the use of the chronological order with that of 'flashbacks' and 'flash wards' and sometimes with parallel events in narrating the story, yet he allows readers to make connections of causality between widely separated events. Thus, by this non-liner structure, he is able to keep readers updated on what's going on in different places. This varies the mood of the novel and makes it "rise until it falls, then retreats back, and right as readers think that the novel is over, the mood rises again until falling drops."⁵³ Which makes the novel to be a long series of puzzles and codes that when deciphered lead one after another toward the final solution. As Thomas Beyer puts it "the place where all will be revealed."⁵⁴

As for the other elements of the book, the plot is what the book is about, and everything else serves it. Brown states that in *Angels and Demons*, he compresses the plot and the actions to intensify the pace of the read and that in order to arouse the reader's curiosity, he tends to end every chapter with a 'cliff-hanger' to compel the reader to turn the page.⁵⁵ Dan Burstein argues that the plot of the novel "moves from one stunning secret to another, from one coded message to the next, from an ancient conspiracy to a modern one"⁵⁶ makes the real world seems mysterious and invokes the adventurous side in the reader by presenting a complex plot filled with mystery and suspense that

never seems to end. E.M. forester considers the "element of surprise or mystery- the detective element.... is of great importance in a plot."⁵⁷ Brown fully awares that the hard part of writing a novel is not the ideas but rather the nuts and bolts of the plot and language and how making it work. He considers the efficiency of words is the way an author respects his reader's time, so he works hard to trim the novel heavily while he is writing.⁵⁸ The language is descriptive and the dialogue is presented in a lecture mode and doling out information slowly. E.M forester states that "it is the function of the novelist to reveal the hidden life."⁵⁹ So it is obvious to see how Brown uses a lot of Robert Langdon's thought as well as other characters' thoughts and writes what persons are thinking more than what they are saying, this helps the reader know the personality and past of each character. Once Brown points out that "in choosing what characters to include in a novel, I select characters who have sets of skills that help more the plot along and also permit me to introduce information. Robert Langdon is a symbologist and art historian.... a character who helps decipher clues and teaches the readers."⁶⁰ Sharveen Coils argues that in *Angels and Demons*, the characters are thoroughly fleshed out with their own unique personality and emotional drives that keep them focused on their goals.⁶¹ Although driven by varying motivations, but many of the characters in the novel exhibit a fierce loyalty toward something and are willing to do anything for the object of their devotion. The great example for this theme of devotion lies in the character of the Camerlengo. He

masterminds the whole situation, believing that he is doing God's will. Another example is that of Leonardo Vetra and his daughter and how they worked hard to keep the secrecy of their experiment.

Dan Brown does not limit himself to a single genre but he takes readers beyond genre boundaries. He tends to bake his novel with group of genres that share an appeal. Dave Franklin states that despite the fact that one side of the novel based on revealing hidden truths, and the other is total fiction, yet what remained is that *Angels and Demons* is a reasonable thriller set with a backdrop of mystery, adventure and full of suspense, conspiracy, secret societies and new scientific discoveries that will change the world.⁶² Thus, it is obvious in the novel that mystery is backed with crime, run through rogue's gallery of suspects, introduces an idiosyncratic detective as he works around police, end with brilliant explanation and unveiling of the killer, who is always the last person readers would have suspected.⁶³ Although some writers depict 'softer-edged' suspense which focuses on descriptions of characters and others depict 'hard-edged' suspense features gritty depiction of crime scene but Brown depicts both. All these subgenres are weaved together with one framework that of the relation of science and religion. Brown states that

books on science and religion ,including *The God particle* (DD.47), *The Tao of Physics*, *The Physics of Immortality*, *The Quark and Jaguar*, and others... This is how I ended up writing

Angels and Demons -a science VS. religion thriller set within a Swiss physics laboratory and Vatican City. The grey area that interested me was the ongoing battle between science and religion, and the faint hope of reconciliation between the two.⁶⁴

David Glover argues that "the thriller was and still is to a large extent marked by the way in which it persistently seek to raise the stakes of the narrative, heightening or exaggerating the experience of events by transforming them into a rising curve of danger, violence or, shock."⁶⁵ This can be seen clearly in the novel. Cyril Wecht points out that death plays a major role in *Angels and Demons*, and it comes in fairly gruesome forms.⁶⁶ His opinion matches that of James Carlisle and Jennifer Carlisle who say that "Brown has provided enough mayhem in his twenty-four-hour day to keep crime labs, and investigators very busy. A drugged Pope, horrifying deaths by branding iron, midair explosion, and most gruesome of all the murder of Leonardo Vetra by Hassassin."⁶⁷

Thus the novel features multiple ritualistic crimes by the murderer who believes himself to be connected to the master of the Illuminati, "and his calling card is a series of cattle-style brands created in the form of six ambigrams,"⁶⁸ one for each of the four elements of science (air, fire, water, and earth), one for the name of Illuminati, and the sixth an enigmatic unnamed symbol that appears as the mystery unraveled.

In their book *The Gospel According to Dan Brown*, Jeff Dunn and Craig Bubeck said that "we enter to *Angels and Demons's* complex labyrinth of intrigue and conspiracy by way of a horrific and bizarre murder,"⁶⁹ that of the use of the prologue where the action begins early, sets up danger and leaves the readers anticipating the final confrontation. This procedure is a distinctive style of suspense genre.⁷⁰ In *Angels and Demons*, the murders begins with that of the first victim Leonardo Vetra whose death scene is exhibited in the following prologue: "Physicist Leonardo Vetra smelted burning flesh, and he knew it was his own... He stared up in terror at the dark figure looming over him. What do you want? The password But.... I don't The intruder pressed down again, grinding the white hot object deeper into Vetra's chest. For the love of God Vetra screamed. But it was too late." (*Angels and Demons*: p.24) Soon, Kohler requests his assistance to uncover the creative murder, and to unveil the interpretation of that symbol, which becomes a piece of puzzle that must be solved in a race against time as soon as Langdon becomes sure that the symbol appears to be authentic, and that after centuries of silence, and long thought to be defund, the Illuminati seems to have resurfaced again.

So who are the Illuminati? Kohler demanded. since the beginning of the history, Langdon explained. a deep rift has existed between science and religion. Outspoken scientist like Copernicus were murdered Kohler interjected. Murdered by the church

for revealing scientific truths. Religion has always persecuted science. yes. But in 1500s, a group of men in Rome fought back against the church... began meeting secretly to share their concerns about the church's inaccurate teachings. They feared that the church's monopoly on 'truth' threatened academic enlightenment around the world. They founded the world's first scientific think tank, calling themselves the enlightened ones. The Illuminati yes, Langdon said European's most learned minds... dedicated to the quest for scientific truth. Kohler fell silent Only through rites of extreme secrecy did the scientists remain safe... The scientists met regularly in Rome at an ultra secret lair they called the church of Illumination. (*Angels And Demons*: pp. 27-8)

Such information creates a great sense of suspense as it raises the question how would the Illuminati kills a fellow scientist? A question leaves Langdon puzzled and unable to give Kohler any accurate interpretation rather than "even the Illuminati were still active today, which I am virtually positive they are not, they would never be involved in Leonardo's death... There is no way they would have murdered a fellow scientist like Vetra. Kohler's eyes turned to ice and told Langdon When you see Vetra's study

room, you will understand things differently." (*Angels and Demons*: pp.35-6) What this study room reveals is totally unexpected. Vetra was both a scientist as well as a priest. So if he comes to be both ,a scientist who is impossible to be killed by his fellow scientists of the Illuminati, and a priest who is respectively esteemed by the church, so who would kill him? This ambiguity will keep the question of "whodunit?" running for most of the novel, leaving readers captivated to turn pages and kept buzy-minded along with Langdon to solve this puzzle. Starting with Galileo's clash with the church and ending with a modern day war between religious people and physicists, "Dan Brown makes the tussle between science and religion ooze from almost every page of his thriller."⁷¹ He sets it within Swiss physics lab and the Vatican city and uses familiar historical figures as pillars, like Galileo, Bernini whom Brown assumed helped found the Illuminati. Brown depicts Galileo as a revengeful, scientific zealot aids and abets the conspiratorial society of Illuminati. Such issue serves as glue for conspiracy theories and for Brown's thriller.

Brown bases the plot of the novel on the premise that the Catholic Church condemned Galileo for promoting Copernicus's theory that the universe was heliocentric. That is why he is "arrested and end almost executed by the church for proclaiming that the sun, not the earth, was the center of the universe,"⁷² which imply that "God had placed mankind somewhere other than at the center of his universe."⁷³ Thus, Galileo was not the first to assert this

idea. It was Nicolas Copernicus who posed this theory in 1543. But this theory is rejected by the Catholic Church which preferred to believe that the earth was the center of the universe and considered the Copernicus system and all those who adapted it will be dealt with as heretics.⁷⁴ But Galileo did not confirm himself to their rules and opinions. He held that

Science and Religion were not enemies, but rather allies... two different languages telling the same story, a story of symmetry and balance... Both Science and Religion rejoiced in God's symmetry... the endless contest of light and dark. Unfortunately, Langdon added, the unification of science and religion was not what the church wanted, since it would have nullified the church's claim that it is the only vehicle that leads to God. (*Angels and Demons*: p.29)

Thus, the church accused him of heresy and called him to Rome in 1633 to face the inquisition for questing papal authority and scientific belief. In his book *A new look at the Epic Confrontation between Galileo and the Church*, Wade Ronald considers that "Galileo's insistence that nature holds the secrets of the universe and that science and mathematics alone could unravel them is what made the church does not accept such radical challenge to its authority."⁷⁵

Brown uses Galileo's and the Illuminati's clash with the church to pave the way for presenting a modern clash between science and religion. Holy wars were still making headlines. *My God is better than your God*. It seemed there was always close correlation between true believers and high body counts. (*Angels and Demons*: p.33) Lee Wimberley advocates this idea when he says "in Brown's thriller as with Galileo's discoveries, "the God Particle" threatens the church since the discovery might begin to bridge the gap between science and religion. It leaves the church struggle to answer the question what role dose the church play if science explains creation?"⁷⁶ In the novel, Brown exhibits how the church agonizes its defeat in the face of science's advances. Concerning this debatable issue, the claims of the church came as the following "since the days of Galileo, the church has tried to show the relentless of science, sometimes with misguided means, but always with benevolent intention." (*Angels and Demons*: p.441)

One of the primary elements of thriller genre is that the protagonist is set on a quest of "treasure hunting mission."⁷⁷ Brown says "*Angels and Demons* builds on the writing device treasure hunts. Langdon as a teacher/symbologist and art historian satisfies dual prerequisites for main hero-that of being a credible teacher and also of being knowledgeable enough to decipher the clues in [an] artistic treasure hunt I create."⁷⁸ This means that despite the fact that Langdon and Vittoria "are not professional detectives who have been specially trained in detecting technique,"⁷⁹ yet they are

turned detective. Mark Shea proposes that it is Langdon's curiosity to open up secrets long forgotten that leads him to do such quest.⁸⁰ Although they do not know what kind of obstacles and danger they will meet along the way, Langdon and Vittoria make their way to the Vatican City, where the Pope who "has always had an affection for the sciences,"(*Angels and Demons*: p.457) has recently died under mysterious circumstances, and the conclave to elect a new Pope has just begun. It is obvious that Dan Brown wedded plots when he throws the process of papal election into the storyline which creates intolerable situation that might be ended in violence which is one of the elements of the outline of crime thriller as danger and threat of death around every turn because of that bomb ticking somewhere under the Vatican weaved together with the process of kidnapping the Senior Cardinals whom are threatened to be murdered one by one. This makes the stakes as serious as the church has ever faced.

Since "mystery is an integral part of the thriller"⁸¹ so that Brown makes the major appeal of the novel is its construction of profound mysteries, remarkably those lead to the murder of Leonardo Vetra as well as the consequence murders of the four cardinals which require the efforts of detective Langdon to retrace the criminal's path to expose the reasons of the crime that instigated the narrative and to decode a complex puzzle related to Illuminati.

According to the fact that thrillers need a conspiracy and hero "whose presence, or stature, is credible, and a conspiracy that appears to pose a real

threat,"⁸² Dan Brown puts his protagonist Robert Langdon in a chase to uncover a conspiracy attempting to bring science and religion into fight. The novel emphasis on action and suspense. The tension is furthered by Brown's use "cliff hanging" technique. Jerry Palmer sees that "for the appreciative reader this suspense is certainly not dependent upon uncertain outcome, since he will read and re-read the book which continued enjoyment"⁸³ Thomas Beyer states that "Dan Brown's new novel is an attempt to find a way to reconcile the gap between science and religion, between the world that we perceive through our senses and the world of the Spirit or beyond our vision or touch. What many may call the New World Order, a new revelation or enlightenment, is in fact as old as recorded history itself."⁸⁴

Brown explains his attitude concerning writing this novel, he says that he grew up surrounded by the paradoxical philosophies of science and religion, from an agnostic mathematician father, and religious church musician mother. This makes him had a hard time to reconcile the two. But "at college, I completed a cosmology course that included a section on Copernicus, Brunu, Galileo, and the Vatican Inquisition against science. Science and religion was a very large part of my life from grade school all the way through college, and I wanted to make them harmonious on a personal level."⁸⁵

Palmer argues that "there can be no question that the thriller portrays event as un expected, even un expectable, and that much of the

reader's pleasure derives from what is presented as the unpredictable,"⁸⁶ therefore, it is clear how Dan Brown surprises readers, at the end of his thriller, that he is not beyond igniting the wick of the battle between science and religion. Instead he is after revealing the hypocrisy of Roman Catholic Cleric. Victoria Nelson points out that "*Angels and Demons* (2000) belongs more closely to the classic Monk Lewis Gothic tradition of the Luciferian rise and fall off a supremely ambitious, power-mad Roman Catholic cleric."⁸⁷ Therefore, at the end of the thriller, the conspiracy is averted, and the world returns to normal. Brown states that "this is how I ended up writing *Angels and Demons*-a science vs. religion thriller."⁸⁸

CONCLUSION

Dan Brown's *Angels and Demons* is a thriller presented as historical novel which make people see history in a new way. This novel is fiction, yet it seek to convince readers that it is based on facts according to the lists of resources mentioned in the text. *Angels and Demons* is a combination of crime, mystery, conspiracy, and religion. It is code breaking thriller which is full of puzzles and riddles. What Brown has accomplished is that he weaves all those elements to present an ancient belief system into a modern – day story. He mixes sub-genres together to serve both the issues he tackles and the story line as well as introducing what is described as genre-crossing tendencies.

The originality of Dan Brown's plots, his extensive research, and his ability to catch reader's imagination and interest from the start point of each

novel until the last words of it, is what make him an exceptional writer. *Angels and Demons* introduces a quest for reconciling science and religion away from the restricted rules adopted by the strict priests. Brown believes that this procedure offers people a proper chance to understand the divine.

NOTES

1. Lisa Rogak, *The Man Behind The Da Vinci Code: The Unauthorized Biography* (United States: Andrews McMeel Publishing, 2005), p.6.

2. Ibid., 7

3. Dan Brown Witness Statement in The Da Vinci Code Case, <http://www.timeonline.co.uk/article.gtml>.

4. Ibid.

5. Rogak, p.11.

6. D. M. Brown, *Dan Brown's Road to Success: An Unauthorized Biography of the Creator of The Da Vinci Code* (USA: Lexington, KY, 2005), pp.20-1.

7. Dan Brown Witness Statement, p.2.

8. Rogak, p.8.

9. D. M. Brown, p.29.

10. Dan Brown Witness Statement, p.6.

11. "Cryptography" is the discipline of studying encrypted text. Encryption is the process through a readable text is transformed into a code that conceals its meaning. James L. Garlow, Timothy Paul Jones, and April Williams, *The Da Vinci Code Breaker* (United States of America: Bethany House, 2006), p.64.

12. Simon Cox, *The Dan Brown Companion: The Truth Behind the Fiction: With a gazetteer to the People and Places Featured in the Robert Langdon Novels* (Great Britain: Mainstream Publishing Company, 2006), p.139.

13. "Art of Ambigram" is a word or words that can be read in more than one way or from more than a single vantage point, such as both right side up and upside down. The word is derived from the Latin: ambi meaning 'both' and gram meaning 'letter'. (Simon Cox, *Illuminating Angels and Demons: The Unauthorized Guide to the Facts Behind Da*

Brown's Bestselling Novel (New York: Fall River Press, 2003), p.13).

14. D. M. Brown, p.35.

15. Rogak, p.77.

16. Dan Brown Witness Statement, p.23.

17. Greg Taylor, *The Guide to Dan Brown's The Solomon Key* (United States of America: De Vorss & Company, 2005), p.7.

18. "Holy Grail". Many today the Holy Grail to be the cup used by Jesus and his disciples during the Last Supper; some also believe Joseph of Arimathea held the cup to catch the blood from Jesus' side as he died. (James L. Garlow, Timothy Paul Jones, and April Williams, *The Da Vinci Code, Breaker* (United States of America: Bethany House, 2006), p.105).

19. Dan Brown Witness Statement, p.15.

20. Rogak, p.76.

21. Helfers, p.10.

22. Taylor, p.21.

23. Dan Brown, interview by Kaplan James, [http://www.truefree thinker.com](http://www.truefreethinker.com), September, 13, 2009.

24. Da Vince's Note Book on Polemics and Speculation.

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25. Dan Brown, *The Da Vinci Code* (United States of America: Anchor Books, 2003).

26. Dan Brown, interview by Matt Laure, Today Show, September, 2009.

27. Saricks, p.81.

28. Simon Cox, *Decooling the Lost Symbol: The Unauthorized Guide to the Fact Behind the Fiction* (New York: Touchstone, 2009), p. ix.

29. Dan Burstein, ed. *Secrets of Angels and Demons: The Unauthorized Guide to the Bestselling Novel* (United States of America: CDS Books, 2004), p.4.

30. Eric Plume, *The Catholic Church and American Culture: Why Claims of Dan Brown Strike a Chord* (Chicago: University of Scranton Press, 2009), p.xxi.

31. A Conversation with Dan Brown, bookbrows, 2001, available at <http://www.bookbrows.com>.

32. Ibid.

33. Amy D. Bernsteir, "Angels and Demons and the Next Pope," in *Secrets of Angels and Demons: The Unauthorized Guide to the Bestselling Novel*, ed. Dan Burstein (United States of America: CDS Books, 2004), p.26.

34. Christopher L. Hodapp, *Decoding the Lost Symbol: Freemasons, Myths and the Mysteries of Washington, D. C.* (United States of America: Ulysses Press, 2010), p.35.

35. Kenneth Boa And John Alan Turner, *The Cospel According To The Da Vinci Code: The Truth Behind Dan Brown's Writings* (United States Of America: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 2006), p.1

36. Thomas R. Beyer, *33 Keys to Unlocking The Lost Symbol: A Reader's Companion to Dan Brown Novel* (New York: Newmarket Press, 2010), p.12.

37. Lisa, p.76.

38. Erin Miller, "Confessing Evangelical," (May21, 2006) <http://www.confessingevangelical.com> (accessed April8, 2011).

39. "Illuminati." The main Plotline of *Angels and Demons* revolves around a conspiracy by the Illuminati against the Catholic Church. Clues left by artists supposedly linked to the secret organization provide the location of the search by Robert Langdon and Vittoria Vetra comes with the discovery of the so-called Church of Illumination, concealed within a well, known landmark, Castle Saint Angelo. The darling subject of conspiracy theorists throughout the world, the idea of there being a group of people called themselves the Illuminati (or "enlightened ones") is as old as the secret society itself is supposed to be. (Cox, p.82).

40. "Bing Bang Theory." This theory could be a metaphor for the clash between the church and science over the question of these theories about the universe's origin. It was first postulated by a Belgian priest called Georges Lemaitre in 1927. Lemaitre's theory asserts that the universe has its origins with the explosion-the Big Bang- of the first primeval atom, kind of cosmic egg consisting of subatomic particles and radiation. According to the core of the theory, the universe was

created some 10-20 billion years ago from the cosmic explosion of the first atom, with matter hurled in all directions and vast a month of energy being unleashed. (Cox, p.26).

41. Cox, p.75.

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43. K. S. Carter, Bookreviews: Angels and Demons, by Dan Brown, January24, 2007, <http://www.heliun.com>.

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46. Beyer, p.12.

47. Dunn and Bubeck, p.14.

48. Mark Shea, *Answering Angels and Demons* (Pennsylvania: Ascension Press, 2009), p.3.

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52. Ibid., 75.

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54. Beyer, 88.

55. Dan Brown and the Langdon Court Case: After many Bogus Conspiracies a real One Finally Surfaces, <http://www.cesnur.org/2006>.

56. Dan Burstein, *Secrets of the Code: The Unauthorized Guide to the Mysteries Behind The Do Vinci Code*, ed. Dan Burstein (USA: CDS Books, 2006), p.189.

57. E. M. Forster, *Aspects of the Novel* (United States of America: Harsourt, Inc., 1927), p.87.

58. Dave Franklin, Bookreviews: Angels and Demons, by Dan Brown, January24, 2007, <http://www.heliun.com>.

59. Forster, p.45.

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61. Sharveen Coils: Bookreviews: Angels and Demons, by Dan Brown, January24, 2007, <http://www.heliun.com>.

62. Dave Franklin, Bookreviews: Angels and Demons, by Dan Brown, January24, 2007, <http://www.heliun.com>.

63. Saricks, p.53.

64. Beyer, p.113.

65. Glover, p.137.

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68. Geoff Hamilton, and Brain Jones, *Encyclopedia of American Popular Fiction*, (New York: Facts on File, Inc., 2009) p.6.

69. Dunn and Bubeck , p.137.

70. Saricks, p.53.

71. Nickerson. p.2.

72. Hole, and Garwood, p.28.

73. Ibid.

74. Cox, p.46.

75. Wade Ronald, *Galileo's Mistake: A New Look at the Epic Confrontation Between Galileo and the Church*.

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Burstein and De Keijzer, p.118

76. Lee Wimberley, *Exploring the Gap between Science and Religion*, 2nd ed. (United States of America: Bennett & Hastings) p.523.

77. Saricks, p.31.

78. Dan Brown Witness Statement, p.13.

79. Saricks, p.214.

80. Shea, p.1.

81. Palmer, p.137.

82. Ibid.,38.

83. Ibid.,58.

84. Beyer, p.114.

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أدب الإثارة في رواية دان براون « ملائكة وشياطين »

ملخص

أدب الإثارة هو نمط من الأدب القصصي يتواجه فيه الأبطال مع اشرار يريدون تدميرهم وتدمير بلدهم واستقرار العالم . عادة ما يرتبط هذا النمط بالمغامرة وقصص التحري . يوظف هذا النمط التشويق والتوتر والإثارة كعناصر رئيسة فيه . وغالبا ما يكتنفه جو من التهديد والعنف والقتل . يتضمن هذا النمط أنماطا فرعية ، قد تنطوي بدورها على عناصر من أنماط أخرى . ومن المقومات التي تسهم في تكوين ادب الإثارة الجيد المؤامرات واسعة النطاق التي تشترك فيها الحكومات والارهابيون أو جمعيات الإخاء السرية .

لا يعد دان براون طارئا على هذا النمط . فكل واحدة من رواياته تتضمن حيكات معقدة ونظريات مؤامرة أسرة تحبس الأنفاس . تطرح روايات براون مجموعة من الشيفرات والالغاز والجناسات والمعاني الغامضة ورسائل مخبأة في اكتشافات علمية وأعمال فنية شهيرة معتمدة اياها وسائل جديدة للتشويق .