

DAN BROWN’S “ANGELS AND DEMONS”- A REPRESENTATION OF THE CULTURE AND PSYCHE OF THE 21ST CENTURY

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Abstract

It is not overstated today to say that justification is more important than justice itself. Perceptions and the capacity to influence those perceptions are the dominant factors today. This study paper tries to highlight the numerous layers of perceptions that are shown in Dan Brown’s book Angels and Demons, depending on a culture and its belief system. The paper’s goal is to examine how two different historical eras’ cultures impacted people’s psyches, and it accomplishes this goal by focusing on the novel’s main characters. The novel covers all the logics and possibilities that can result in a persuasive response to problems that are thought to be only a part of ancient myth thanks to its ingenious plot structure. Robert Langdon, the main character, clarifies and investigates the illuminati myth; Vittoria Vetra, with her cutting-edge inventions, illustrates the value of science in human life; and Carlo Ventresca, Camerlengo, studies the numerous facets of the power of science. Religion that controls human nature. The author expertly paints a portrait of the modern human mind through each of these people. In this research study, we attempt to analyze this representation and its applicability to the Justification Hypothesis.

Keywords: *Psyche, Logics, Perception, Justice, Culture*

A certain set of people’s belief system is fundamentally influenced by their culture. Culture is the result of a steadfast set of customs that motivates a population to progress. These beliefs can occasionally be traced back further in time, while others can shift or even disappear entirely. When a long-forgotten habit or belief system reappears in a modern age, it disturbs the current way of doing things. This disruption can occasionally merge with the current culture and become a part of it. When a disturbance challenges the status quo, the culture experiences complexity and develops into a multifaceted organism. This essay use Dan Brown's novel Angels and Demons to highlight the intricacy that results from the reemergence of an ancient culture and its impact on people's psychology. In addition, it analyzes the manner in which it influences people's belief systems, which are fundamental to culture.

The definition of culture is the definition of history in addition to being a conviction of activities and belief systems. Similar to how belief systems are created, culture creates history. To be more specific, there is a connection between history, culture, and belief systems, and these factors all serve the same purpose. Multidirectional. They continually shape and transform one another on their own. When one of the three changes, the other two follow suit. Therefore, culture can be characterized by its responsibilities in addition to its history and belief system. A duty that seeks improvement and perfection, as Mathew Arnold describes in his essay,

“Sweetness and Light” states, “Culture is then probably described not as having

As its origin in curiosity, but as having its origin in the love of perfection; it is a

Study of perfection. It moves by the force, not merely or primarily of the scientific

Passion for pure knowledge, but also of the moral and social passion for doing

Good”(12).

In addition to scientific discoveries and technological advancements, Arnold defines culture as the love of perfection and a love of a better life. Then, knowledge and morality, two distinct things existing together, will be culture's contribution. Dan Brown's book *Angels and Demons* highlights this culture's paradoxical existence. The Illuminati were a group of scientific pioneers who believed in the advancement of humanity through research. The author weaves together the history and cultural practices of this group with the Catholic church's moral teachings. One can wonder if the traditions and practice of the Illuminati qualify as a culture when considering their practice. How is it different from a cult if it is a culture? The novel contains the answers to these queries. The Robert Langdon, the book's main character, an art historian, views the Illuminati as a group of idealistic individuals. They kept their existence a secret in order to avoid the church's irrational punishment for supporting and promoting science above the practice of religion. One might state that a practice is more active when it exerts more effort to oppose a prevalent belief trend and influences more individuals for the better. One might claim that the Illuminati practice at that historical moment is a culture when it requires more effort to resist a prevalent wave of belief and influences more people for the better. Additionally, it is not a cult because the main goal of a cult is believing in the worship of an unorthodox and inhumane higher power, both good and bad. The variations are also caused by how it is applied. When the antagonist in the book leaves clues behind, they are riddles, which are a sort of refined intelligence. Given these ideas of distinctions, it is possible to conclude that the Illuminati is more than a cult.

The novel *Angels and Demons* by Dan Brown is a science fiction with a thrilling plot

structure and a novel that investigates the power quotient of two different belief system, faith and reason. The novel being a science fiction, has a plot consisting the fear of end, a catastrophic destruction of the Catholic Church. The destruction of the catholic church implies the End Time prophecies, the End of the world, the Apocalypse. The author has constructed the novel brilliantly revolving the contradiction between the two system of belief without nearing the premises of apocalypse (120).

The book thus turns into science fiction with a dystopian scenario that challenges conventional wisdom, transforming modern culture in the process. The work contains an intriguing chapter about the age-old conflict between reason and faith. The head of the church, the Pope, doesnot elude this fascinating description of these incompatible cultural beliefs.

The main goal of the protagonists' acts throughout the book is to promote social harmony by resolving issues that they each perceive as having an adverse impact on the system. Making people embrace history for what it is and what it might turn into as each day goes by is Robert Langdon's goal. Vittoria Vetra, it is to establish the ways of science as an equivalent to the ways of faith, to make both the systems of faith and the systems of science as a path to enlightenment; for Camerlengo, it is to make the pure form of Catholicism triumph and to be a leader of it. Through their religious beliefs, the individuals in the book illustrate how history and culture are intertwined. The historical and present are brought together by Robert Langdon, Vittoria Vetra, and Camerlengo as a result of their philosophy. This becomes clear when their perception of the Illuminati evolves over time. Science fiction with an end-of-the-world theme, like the book *Angels and Demons*, uses temporal manipulation to simulate the ultimate apocalypse. As Elana Gomal states, “What is particularly striking about the apocalyptic plot is the way in which it separates time and space by linking the former to the horror of the Tribulations and the latter to the perfection and quietude of the millennium”(122).

The novel's Camerlengo character serves as the author's vehicle for using this. The priest creates a conspiracy against the Catholic Church, which he considers to be corrupt, using ancient Illuminati cultural norms. He takes use of the widespread belief in the Illuminati to highlight their horror. Since they are ignorant of history, the Illuminati is regarded as a cult. The author highlights the original purpose for which it was created. This apocalyptic temporal pattern is spread through the historical Catholic church. The story, however, adheres to the apocalyptic plot structure mentioned in Gomel's article.

The novel's treatment of science illustrates the temporal discontinuity that is unique to the apocalyptic plot pattern. Each century sees science in a different light. This distinctive quality is highlighted by the author through the scientist Vittoria Vetra persona. Father of Vittoria Vetra is a proponent of the fusion of science and religion. In order to find a common thread between science and religion, he works on antimatter. He makes a connection between the ideas of matter and anti-matter. He works to establish that antimatter, the substance that opposes matter, is capable of generating energy, the first step in the process of creation. Together with her father, Vittoria Vetra completes the research successfully. When Camerlengo rejects science and attributes the cause of devastation to it, she argues that the two spheres are connected because,

My father was on your quest! A parallel path!God is not some omnipotent

authority looking down from above, threatening to throw us into a pit of fire if we

disobey. God is the energy that flows through the synapses of our nervous system role and the chambers of our hearts! God is in all things! (585)

The change in thinking leads to a change in belief structure, and this shift affects an entire culture. When these psychological modifications are contrasted, a new perspective on culture is gained on how they affect people's minds. Vittoria Vetra considers science to be a pioneer in developing the future. Camerlengo adheres to religion and the uncorrupted Catholic Church system, a church that is devoid of politics and based solely on faith in God and people. Robert Langdon takes on the role of this person who dares to cross both. Three distinct individuals, each with their own belief system, come together to forge a new civilization that gives equal weight to all possibilities. The author uses both reason and faith's opposing arguments in order to construct the plot as a scientific fiction and to increase the tension and thrill factor specific to the genre. In order to build a new society that strives for perfection and goes beyond the beliefs of the Illuminati, the Catholic Church, and science, the author combines the two perspectives.

The psyche of the characters in the play suits each group of people on earth. We live

unequal lives and so the justifications abide likely. We filter our feelings, images, wishes from

our self-conscious system (Freud). When the self-consciousness itself is disrupted and questioned, these things that we pretend to exist ultimately find a way out. Our justifications for our acts are based on these filtered thoughts, emotions, and desires. These filters always keep the truth hidden, so every action is justified by them. Swanson argues, "justifications that people make to themselves and others- justifications so designed that the defender, not just other people, can accept them"(1988). Swanson makes a valid point. Law and logic never change. Diverse ideologies have optimism because of the potential to alter such laws and reasoning. Justifications are beliefs in oneself. The lack of acknowledgment, the willingness to wait for the storm to pass, and the unexpected. Everyone in the modern world is insane due to access to everything possible and a lack of faith in God and oneself. With this Justification Hypothesis as a foundation, it is therefore evident that the novel captures the mind of modern humans. Every action, regardless of consciousness to moralities and rules of nature, is justified by the mind. The justification looks reasonable, yet it cannot be accepted because being a human is essential to possess humanity. As a result, the author highlights contemporary society in the novel's catastrophic plot framework. a culture that runs afoul of certain parts of history.

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