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Historiographic Metafiction and Symbolism in Dan Brown's *The Da Vinci Code* (2003)

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Dedications

Hasni's Dedication

First and foremost, I would like express my deepest and warmest gratitude to my enduring parents. Thank you for everything.

Second, to all my friends and relatives who gave such drive to be what I am today, I say thank for your support and encouragement.

Zerouala's Dedication

First of all, I would like to thank my parents for their love and support to continue my way in life. I ask Allah to protect you.

Second, I would like to thank all my brothers and my friends for standing beside me in my worst days, I am grateful.

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Abstract

This dissertation is an attempt to provide an analytical view of history, and how it became at a certain point of time neglected, i.e. rejected as an obstacle to the modern beliefs after being in a prestigious position. After that, history became prominent again after the replacement of modernism by the postmodernist literature, or rather a new genre called the Historiographic Metafiction. This genre aimed to provide the fictional work with a conscious and living quality through addressing the reader directly as well as adding real historical events, places and personages for the sake mocking and parodying or correcting a misunderstanding. We see that the best example to fulfill such study is by putting Dan Brown's novel *The Da Vinci Code* (2003) Under the microscope. The aim is to make a projection of some studies of what the postmodernist theory came up with on Brown's controversial claims. On the other hand, there is also a symbolist study apart which seeks to provide dimensional uses of symbolism in order to clarify their importance as a complement to the events.

المخلص

هذه المذكرة عبارة عن مسعى لإعطاء نظرة تحليلية حول التاريخ وكيف أصبح منبوذاً في مرحلة معينة من الزمن، أو بعبارة أخرى مرفوضاً كونه عقبة للمعتقدات المعاصرة بعد ما كان في مكانة مرموقة، ليعود التاريخ إلى مكانته البارزة بعد استبدال الحداثة ليصبح جزءاً من أدب ما بعد الحداثة أو بالأحرى نوعاً أدبياً يسمى الميناقص التاريخي. الغرض من هذا النوع الأدبي تزويد العمل الخيالي بخاصية واعية وحية من خلال مخاطبة القارئ بطريقة مباشرة، مع إضافة أحداث ومواقع وشخصيات حقيقية من أجل السخرية والتهكم أو تصحيح مفهوم خاطئ. ونرى أن أفضل مثال لتحقيق هذه الدراسة هو بوضع رواية شيفرة دافنشي لدان براون (2003) قيد التحليل. ليكون الهدف من ذلك إسقاط بعض الدراسات التي أتت بها نظرية ما بعد الحداثة على إدعاءات براون الجدلية. ومن ناحية أخرى هناك أيضاً دراسة رمزية على حدى تسعى لتزويد استعمالات الأبعاد الرمزية بغية توضيح أهميتها كتكملة لسرد الأحداث.

List of Abbreviation

HM: Historiographic Metafiction

TDVC: The Da Vinci Code

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General Introduction

For most people, the credibility is the essence of defining the knowledge to be confidently delivered and dealt with through time in order to lay firm foundations to support whatever claim it meant to be. However, since the Enlightenment era, everything has faith in science, and the logicity rose against all aspects that restricted the literacy among which the church used religion as a business to rule the others by making the ignorance as an imposed lifestyle. After that dark era, knowledge took another shape to dominate all sectors, and writings as well that it was considered as a mean to deliver one's thoughts or beliefs, since the writing and reading are the best investment to fulfill whoever's destiny. In addition, literature has always been, and still, the refuge and the realm where writers crystallize their thoughts and beliefs as a reaction to certain circumstances and different issues that without them there wouldn't be a subject matter. Among the circumstances that were left as a scar on the face of the western world as developed countries, the First World War, on the one hand, led to the frustration and the alienation of many writers, lamenting the science and mechanism development, but all under the power of accepting what happened.

In addition, we can still remember that because all is written in the history books under the banner of the historiography that provides a wide range of ways to understand and interpret the history as it is. History was a prestigious subject throughout time encompassing all types of knowledge to be added as another life to those who are interested by going deeper for the purpose of looking for the essence of an event as a moral as long as history readers are unlikely to be among those who don't learn from it, consequently, they repeat it. However, that prestige became shaky in the last century due to the progress and the scientific development, positioning the history at the stake. Since then, it was noticed that many critics and intellectuals neglected the

role of history in modern times to be joined to the list of rejections such as religion and metaphysics. Yet, historiography, by historians, agreed to deliver other stories instead stating history directly by forming a progressive attitude, mainly philosophical one, to help with the emancipation of humanity. However, what was imposed as an attitude evaporated after the Second World War to be succeeded by a new appreciation by providing a new attitude to follow which saw what was once old and rejected is new again.

With that in mind, many writers devoted their thoughts through writing to speak about serious issues that dominated the mind in a passive way to cope with a certain society or circumstances without considering the surroundings. Many adopted certain trends to focus on the nature of writings and texts owing to the fact that the world is a set of reflexive words made by human, to become later as a law of empowering and devastating what once was blindly followed as a cult and history as well.

Among the works that elevated the thinking of their writers that were accepted and debatable was *The Da Vinci Code*. *The Da Vinci Code* is considered as one of the best thrillers works written by Dan Brown who is renowned for the enigmatic master. It was published in 2003 which became the worldwide bestseller that sold over eighty million copies, and also translated to approximately forty-five languages. The novel raised a storm of controversy all over the world because of the claims about the conventional and inherited beliefs, seeing them as something should never be taken as an absolute. On the one hand, on the other hand, every single thought by any human can be misleading, to be later embraced as a belief. Moreover, the DVC was written as an interpretation to cover many dimensions though providing codes, in turn, each one holds ideas in order to break some firm beliefs or to correct one's fallacy about a certain topic. The DVC is considered as the fiction that speaks for itself owing to the fact that it encompasses

part of myths and real events that always make the reader wonder about the exact piece of information whether it is real or fictional. Yet, Brown provided a set of comments aside in order to draw the attention of the reader to what was meant to be considered as fiction.

Dan Brown in writing such kind of novels, led to a severe criticism by many writers and the church in the first place. After one year only from publishing Brown's novel in 2003, Darrell L. Bock responded with his book *Breaking the Da Vinci* seeking to demonstrate answers that every reader may ask when reading the novel, claiming that fiction stays fiction, especially when it comes to the religious side that is considered as an absolute truth. Understanding what he said, was meant that as long as religion is impeccable, history, in turn, is credible. Additionally, Bradley Bowers, in 2007, wrote his book *The Da Vinci Code in the Academy*, to provided partial analytical view of the novel where he spoke about some aspects of the postmodernism opposing the modernism in his third chapter, yet he neglected the role of history in the theory of the postmodernism in general, and the novel in specific. Furthermore, understanding from Stephen Clark's critical book *The Da Vinci Code on Trial: Filtering Fact from Fiction* his intention to detect and separate the amalgamation between the fact aspects and the fictional ones. In the process of indicating to what it might be as a part of fiction, and what is definitely actual is itself a very broad field to speak about, clearly was an attempt to draw the attention to what was already dealt with by many critics in speaking about the truth. U.S. News and World Report magazine published a book as a guide to the novel entitled *Secrets of the Da Vinci Code* in order to make the novel understood by depicting the majority of the historical facts, scenes and symbols, referring to the real locations and speculation. However, speculating Dan Brown's aims of using certain locations, such as France, and different points of view on the one hand. On the other, imposing the

historical events agreed upon, is clearly sufficient to say that some parts of this guide are contradictory

The previous claims of the critics put the DVC on the microscope of criticism to show their dissatisfaction about not just accepting the truth, but distorting the history through the use of symbolism. Hence, they were biased not providing any constructive feedback toward the expertise that Brown has shown, of which they were analyzed by their absolute vision, accusing Brown, by some critics as a conspiracy.

This study can be seen as a chance to provide another way of studying history apart from distortion and what is so-called the absolutes. Since there were accusations against Brown belittling history, there is an inevitable option to include postmodernist touch in order to clarify the flexibility of the history between actuality and the probability. Therefore, our assumption sees that if Brown has written history in a such way, then there is a logical reason in showing his hatred to the church as an infidel who believes in symbology. It is also likely to be that the analyzing of art works by Brown could be considered as a value judgment, or to be as fictional claims in order to fit the storyline. So it is needed through making this analysis to know how the history is seen by the knowledgeable and the normal person.

For the purpose at hand, this research is an attempt to analyze the historical and the symbolic dimensions that are depicted in the novel, counting on an academic plan, raising the following questions:

- 1- How can we possibly provide a discursive postmodern reading for the Da Vinci Code novel?
- 2- In what way Brown relied on the metafictional style in telling history?

3- Since the novel is set of codes, what is the proper way to demonstrate the symbolist dimensions of the novel?

To answer these questions, we deemed to adopt the analytical approach of research for the sake of examining the Da Vinci Code through providing different insights of one reading. This research is divided into three chapters. The first chapter is provided as a theoretical part in which the reader can find sets of definition that all encompassed in the postmodernism, focusing on the historiographic metafiction as a mixture of two components, the symbolism movement. The second chapter is the projection of the first theories and postmodernist study on the Dan Brown's novel, mainly focusing on the historiographic metafiction. The third one will be seen as well as a projection of the symbolism that were mentioned in the novel, providing sets of dimensions to study.

Chapter One

The Emergence of Postmodernism and the Historiographic Metafiction Genre

I.1. Introduction

Literature is the key to represent everything has an essence, mostly all aspects of life in different range of ways, owing to the flexibility of language in the contribution of that certain representation. the boundlessness of fiction provides many options in getting across what is meant to say or express, taking you everywhere unlike the logic that takes you from one particular point to another. As an exception, when it comes to the precision information and stating the knowledge honestly as it is, everything is changed. In the past, fiction lost a huge part in the field of history in terms of interpretation according to many historians. History, apart from distortion, is seen from different angles, angles which prospectively different either to be praised or dispraise, being up to the concerned person or country as a mean of identity to them. The best example is the one who writes history, in relation to what has been said, history is written by the victor, where the headlines say whatever the powerful and the conquer says, is completely right.

This chapter is dedicated to background study of modern literature studies in general, and contemporary studies specifically, scoping out postmodernism along with postmodernity. The main focus is to provide a analytical method in order to support discursive studied since the postmodernism concerns with texts, to end up massively dealing with the notion of history from the postmodern perspective, the nature of the self-reflexive writing, then moving to the use of the historiographic metafiction as a means of creating a new way of seeing history. Finally, the last point to be concerned with is the art of symbolism as a way of ciphering and deciphering as well as a systematically functioning mean of alluding and sending messages.

I.2. Modernism

In order to fulfill comprehensive understanding, there should be terminological explanation. The term “modern” appeared for the first time in the sixteenth century, yet it cannot be used interchangeably with the word “modernity”. The word Modern was derived from “the Latin *modo* which means current”, i.e. it is everything new and unprecedented (Childs 12). Modernity is a term marked by historians in the mid-nineteenth century which the individual became self-determining in the face the controlling conventions. An era which the rationality, science and teleology were represented as the essence of the meaning in understanding the world. Modernity to Baudelaire, who came up with this concept, sees it as “the fashionable, fleeting and contingent in art, in opposition to the eternal and immutable” (14). On the other hand, the first use of the term “Modernism” was in the eighteenth century which used for speaking about the modern times’ aspects, however, the in the end of the second half of the nineteenth century, the term was applied to “the modern opinions, styles or expressions” (13). So, we can clearly say that it’s either a period, genre, style, or a mixture of these.

Undoubtedly, the scientific and the social development were acknowledged to be the main factors that led to the collapse of the Victorian conservative domination to witness the beginning of a new era in the last half of the nineteenth century. The realist movement aim was to represent the real world, and to depict the society during the half nineteenth century exactly as it was seen, however, at the beginning of the twentieth century, modernism emerged as a reaction against that movement taking the lead of being a philosophical and artistic movement in a modern way of representing the world. The first half of the twentieth century was filled with a lot of changes that led to progress on different levels: in philosophy, literature, architecture and art, especially after the World War I which was known as the zenith of the movement. The concern of studying the

relationship between the individual and the environment was specifically done by intellectuals, however, the literature widened the range linguistically standing out in “poetry, fiction, drama and literary criticism” (Elective Group 4 2).

Generally speaking, the movement wasn't inevitably a separation from realistic one, but it was a rejection of all forms of the realist movement, and because of what the modernism came up with, some individuals made their attempts to change the conventional modes of representation. To illustrate, in art, particularly, painting has defined the creativity of the painters through adding different dimensional sides in their paintings with using the color, line and shape harmonically. Besides the art, the focus of literature was on the use of new forms on the basis of language, the narrating themes such as character, narration, plot, and the adopting of the ideas and theories of the intellectuals such as Einstein's time and space in fiction where time period of the story is a day as in “Ulysses and Mrs Dalloway” (Childs 129).

Speaking about the art, the modernisms in plural means that it was largely manifested to be the movement that includes many movements, i.e. most of them were stylistic and artistic which embraced a new fashion in expressing the self and the beauty of the world in general, representing each movement as the avant-garde in particular. To exemplify, among those artists there were Surrealists who targeted the use of the subconscious with challenging the reason, secondly, Dadaists in exploring the absurdity, lastly, the abstract expressionist concerning picturing to attract the others emotion to their art (Malpas17).

Broad speaking about literature, the best way adopted to understand the nature of the modernist literature, is by reading the masterpieces of writers to approach the meaning of what was written deeply, combining the historical, literary, and political dimensions together. The written works aimed to put the reader into a mind-blowing situation testing their assimilation in order to

prepare them for the next step of subsequent events (Childs 4). The modernist prose can be seen as having philosophical and poetic background which is the thing that made it hard to be understood, precisely analyzed, because without paying attention to that, the normal reader always sees the mode of "normality" in those works owing to the lack of knowledge. Any prose of the previous literary movements had features to be differentiated, and for the sake of exemplifying, there are: "solipsistic mental landscape, an unreliable narrator, psychological and linguistic repetition, an obsession with language, a questioning towards 'reality', uncertainty in a Godless universe, the constraints of convention against the drives of passion and black humour" (6).

For further explanation, modernist writers tended to adopt and merge intellectuals' theories and ideas with their works which among them was the psychological technique, namely the stream of consciousness and the interior monologue. The stream of consciousness was coined by Henry James In the nineteenth century, it is defined as the "continuous flow of thought and sensation in the human mind" (Lodge 42). In her novel *Pointed Roofs*, Dorothy Richardson was the first modernist writer who used this technique in the 1915, then she was followed by Virginia Woolf *The Voyage* out in the same year, and Joyce by *Ulysses*. Later, from 1915 to 1941, the stream of consciousness was at its zenith when Woolf's "*Mrs. Dalloway, To the Lighthouse, The Waves* and *Between the Acts*" were the prominent masterpieces that defined that technique (Electric Group 4 20). On the other hand, the use of the psychological technique the interior monologue, in Joyce's *Ulysses*, was also remarkably evident where the reader is wallowed in the character's mind and the process of considering things rather than being told about (Lodge 47).

In addition, the critic Norman Cantor demonstrated the main characteristics that dominated the modernist writings which most of them were probably representational in his work *Model of Modernism*, those characteristics were: rejecting the history, or being anti-historicist, considering

it as a mere analytical thing which is out of the truth, in fixed position. Additionally, it focused on the specificity more than the generality, and that was appeared more than the generality, and that was appeared in studying the individual rather than the society. Moreover, It also dealt with the self-referential works, works which were of a conscious mode, and self-contained texts (qtd. in Childs18).

On the last days of modernism, days before to be replaced with postmodernism and the modern was replaced by contemporary, Samuel Beckett published his novel *Murphy* in 1938 to be considered as one of the works that carried almost all what modernist artists had come up with. As what already said, writings are the best definition of understanding the movement, so the modernist features that were demonstrated in his novel, contributing to create a unique masterpiece are: firstly, religious skepticism which raised the idea that the human has the free will, secondly, the introspective mode focusing on the psychological side more than the reality. Thirdly, the “linguistic innovation” along with experimentation. Lastly, the consciousness of the character of the surrounding events which is called the self-referentiality (5).

The first half of the twentieth century witnessed two separated wars which led to heavy losses and devastation on all levels of life. The First World War, or the Great War, created a frustrating and pessimistic mode resulted in a fragmented society and alienation of many artists. Artists crystallized their feelings of helplessness in the art and aesthetic works, lamenting their free choices under the circumstances of the domination of technology and machine (27). The Second World War, on the other hand, was the bloodiest war of all time, as a result, it tipped the scales against the modernity, as Williams claims that the ‘modern’ has been frequently used to refer to the avant-garde, however, since World War II onward, this sense was changed by the

term “contemporary”, while “modern” has shifted from meaning ‘now’ to ‘just now’ (qtd in Childs 12).

I.3. Postmodernism

The starting point of defining the postmodern era, and its differences was essentially by artists like Carl Andre through shaping their new thoughts in their “sculpture” works to be shown as a stance in the face of the modern art, and it was considered by some critics as the start of postmodernity, instead of the end of the Second World War. Such qualities in that art grasped the public attention to its awkwardness, and novelty at the same time, to which it was seen, according to many intellectuals, as having a political dimension as well (Malpas 2).

Postmodernism and postmodernity are two concepts involved in the postmodern discourse, and each of them consequently represents a specific linguistic use. Postmodernity is used by historians to “designate a specific cultural context or historical epoch”, unclear specified date of the era which started after the Second World War with marking officially the end of the modern one. Postmodernism, on the other hand, raised as a reaction to all movements, and it is applied to the representation of a style, art, or genre (9). Mainly reaching the zenith in the Nineteen Seventies and Eighties to deal with different areas of studies which were already disparaged or neglected by other movements and intellectuals. The concept of “postmodernism” is not easy to be fixed by a clear definition for critics due to the plurality of its practice whether was cultural or artistic, yet it can be perceived as sets of definitions formed to represent the meaning of the contemporary period. In other words, the role of media with the variety of disciplines, and the flexibility of language led to different definitions, each one provided a certain definition, for instance, the meaning for literature students is unlike for philosophers, historians, or sociologists (6).

According to Lyotard, postmodern is a “condition” which became the aftermath of the devastation of the War which led to a whole revolutionary attitude. Postmodernism is considered as an aesthetic and cultural theory which encompasses a lot of claims be it philosophical, literary or architectural, as counterparts to the modernism by rejecting its “ism”, or avant-garde movements, and embracing the late capitalism. The media development and communication were the strengthening forces of the acceptance of those new and aware beliefs that helped taking everything for granted in terms of suspecting the knowledge, and applying it playfully rather than advancingly as the modernist one (3). In other words, in describing the nature of postmodernist works, it should be considered that they weren’t “masterful”, but rather they were playful and anarchic (5).

I.3.1. Postmodern discourse

The nature of fiction has inevitably changed from one movement to another, basically the way of representing that particular period. Clearly, the romanticism and realism served the ideas that bind together the individual and the society. On the other hand, the modernist fiction was completely different which demonstrated the separation of the individual from the society, and their rejection of the tradition to live the loneliness focusing more on the psyche of the individual. Lastly, the postmodernist fiction wasn't a matter of “opposition”, but it was a matter of representing the contemporary society on the basis of “mystery and concealment” (Waugh 11).

The French critic and historian Michel Foucault analyses how the power of the institution is founded through statements. The discourse is the language, whether speech or writing , uses for the sake of ruling society in particular way, a way that used by those who are empowered by the higher authority, such as hospitals, law courts, and boards of examiners. On the other hand, it is used as well as to prevent something or to condemn the minorities in the society such as

“witches, mesmerists, faith healers, homosexuals, Communist sympathizers, and anarchist protesters” (Butler 45). Foucault referred the making of the discourse to the “leftists” who believed that society should be ruled by money and power, consequently, both “power and knowledge” lie mainly in institutions, for example, the asylums are filled with the people who represent the “opposition” of the reasonable people in the society according to a certain discourse made to exclude those people. Additionally, the “normalizing” discourse makes people subdue, even unconsciously, to the rules of dominant power, in which the sexists, racists, and imperialists also adopt, which all lead to the creation of what is called in postmodernism “the other” (46).

Another significant point that postmodernists embraced in dealing with texts is the deconstruction theory. Literary criticism defined the contemporary studies that chiefly concerned with discussing the literary works in attempt to give different explanations for each particular work, in this respect, among those theories that shape this interest in the deconstruction theory. Jacques Derrida is a French philosopher came up with this theory that soon has become as a significant approach in the studies such sociology, architecture and music. The corner stone of this theory and philosophical trend is the relativism as principle in rejecting every absolute which in its absence, the study cannot be made, i.e. any text cannot be fully understood regardless how well-constructed it is, owing to the fact that people are different from each other on many levels, especially in comprehending the language that is considered as “unreliable cultural constructs” (17).

The postmodern texts are characterized by the conventional texts use, but in a functional way, namely the intertextuality, parody, and pastiche, where all are considered as the main factors that each text definitely contains, at least one of them.

On the one hand, the term intertextuality was coined by Julia Kristeva who illustrates that each written work is a combination of texts, and each is drawing on another. This device is mostly found in literature, and it can be used in deferent ways whether such as in form of “pastiche, quotation, parody, or allusion” (Lodge 98). Intertextuality had a major role in strengthening the content of the text, especially the historical rewritten texts by the postmodernists in order to solve the issue between the past and the present (Hutcheon 118).

On the other hand, modernism was marked by praising the universalities and absolutes, when that movement fell down, postmodernism rose in contrast, instead of mourning and lamenting science, it ignored the universalities by contesting them ironically and in a parodic way. On the one hand, parody is one of the literary devices and functioning forms that postmodernism adopted in dealing with texts and discourse, it essentially serves the aim of the of the theory which is the challenging of the past forms and movement. This device targets the individual assumption about crucial ideas, changing the overall look about that, just for fulfilling the postmodern claim. The postmodernism challenges lie in the emancipating from objectivity and passivity toward “the role of history in art and thought” (Hutcheon 11). The postmodernism has a liberating mode which gave minorities to speak on the behalf of their people, among them, to exemplify, the “Afro-American artists”, women as such who wanted to show the liberty from males abuse and the tradition enslaving (16). The use of postmodern parody is unlikely to be compared with the old use of theories, such the eighteenth century’s ones, however since it compasses many fields such as literature, art, architecture, movies, etc. and attempts to relate its discourses to the social ones, it saw that the proper definition of parody as “repetition with critical distance that allows ironic signaling of difference at the very heart of similarity” (26).

I.3.2. Science Fiction and Fairy Tales

In his book, Brian McHale speaks about a crucial ideas which are about the existence and the way of considering the world, these ideas argue the change from modernism to postmodernism, such Faulkner's novel *Absalom, Absalom!*, To underline the transformation from the epistemological issues to the ontological questions that are raised about the status of the world and reality, what is the world? Understanding that the ontological domination on the postmodernist fiction is for the sake of exploring different worlds, and discovering the boundaries between them (10). For further explanation, the modernist writers supported their detective fictions by the epistemological theory, however, science fiction, along with postmodernist fiction, was essentially made by the ontological one. Science fiction always aims to create controversial ideas, and logical explanation about a certain phenomenon, usually by creating boundaries between our current time and world with another world or dimension known as "the parallel lines", for instance, time travelling, the invasion of the UFO, or any abnormal inventions (59).

When the narrator uses his imagination to speak about the future, he creates a fascinating view, of which the imagery technique is excessively used for appealing to the readers' senses. The scientific fiction is the art of writing beyond the reality that is fallen under the domination of time and space factors taking an opposite stance toward the historical novel. On the one hand, Foreshadowing technique in anticipating the future plays a major role in this fiction, on the other hand, the tense that is used at the beginning is probably the future, but as soon as will turn to be the past coping with the nature of narrating. George Orwell's novel 1984 can be seen as the best example in speaking about the science fiction, though the novel was written in the year 1949, he successfully innovated a future environment of the year mentioned on the cover (Lodge 135). And he too wrote that "those who control the present control the past and those who control the past control the future" (qtd. in Jenkins 22).

On the other hand, in speaking about the fairy tales and fantasy, J.R.R. Tolkien, the father of fantastic-horror story, In his essay *On Fairy-Stories* tended to define the fairytales in a nutshell as “supernatural beings of diminutive size, in popular belief supposed to possess magical powers and to have great influence for good or evil over the affairs of man” (1). The fantastical world is unlimited, and it contains a lot of spectacular things besides what he came up with in his famous novel *The Lord of the Rings*, leaving his touch in this sub-genre to be followed later using “elves and fays, and besides dwarfs, witches, trolls, giants, or dragons” (2).

I.3.3. History and Grand Narratives

The historical discourses aim is to provide us with the knowledge for understanding the nature of the world, and in order to understand the notion of history, there are some relating concepts to it. In his book, *Re-thinking History*, Keith Jenkins widely dealt with the conception of the past, history and historiography clarifying that “The past has gone and history is what historians make of it when they go to work. History is the labour of historians... and when they meet, one of the first questions they ask each other is what they are working on” (8). The acceptable definition of how the history is shaped, apart from telling stories, is an “inter-textual, linguistic construct” (9). Butler demonstrates how the postmodernist critics see the history in different way, believing that “History is therefore at base just another more or less socially acceptable narrative, competing for our attention and our assent; just another way of putting things, which will survive, or not, through a process of discussion and debate” (33).

In this context, Lyotard dealt with the way of gaining the knowledge and how it is embraced by certain society in form of narratives for understanding the world, which are linked to some rule that were put to fulfill the legitimacy of certain narrative. He came up with the notion of metanarrative which is set of rules used for judging the legitimacy of a topic while

grandnarrative is the “governing principles of modernity”, i.e. the grand narratives show how the world works consequently, to construct a new society that is going forward to the progress (Malpas 37). It is obvious that in the modern era, all types of conventions were rejected, and history as such, which wasn't however forgotten. The modern historical grand narratives that were given to the society was for determining its future view, as Hegel and Scott's claim, in which the former dealt with “speculative dialectic” and the latter main concern was the “historical novels”, that the role of each individual's experience as a small part of the that grand story. To exemplify, though the Christian religion's principles were seen as a conscious activity in every religious people's life, another none-religious people produce their grand narrative to refute religion, made the rejection of religion one of the modernity which can be seen as a theological metanarrative (82).

In addition, Jean-Luc Nancy argues that the claim of the ‘grand narratives’ of the modernism toward the development of the sense of the world to the society is no longer exist, because of the challenging modes of the postmodernism that stand against the universalities such as history. The postmodern theory presents multiple, conflicting, “finite histories”, which means that each individual or society has their own perception of seeing things around him, as a result, each can come up with a particular version of particular incident apart from what is called the “universal”, i.e. the making of history, and the establishment of identity lies in the way of what society considers suitable (Malpas 97-98).

Moreover, the newly philosophical claims of that time would be an obstacle if were seen through realism, and the inevitability of the failure of history was chiefly in the empiricism and science. Since the postmodernists main concerns were about texts, their view about history was as comparable as literature, just another narrative in which the evidence were nothing but inter-

played texts to form a “fictional plot”, so if the history fails, then the literature fails. The historian cannot just write in an objective way otherwise it is a myth. History is limited according Alun Munslow due to the fact that the meaning of history depends on certain social views which enable people to access to reality (Bulter 32-33). The postmodern theorists problematized history, and using both “provisionality and indeterminacy” didn't mean the denial of the history. On the other side, the relativism and scepticism were essentially two of the postmodern principles faced off with the modern practices, be it methodological or epistemological, deconstructing the notion of the absolute truth. The common denominator between history and fiction discourses, on the level of form and meaning, is the system of writing, as a result, the attempt of using fiction in favor of history is not for suppressing the truth, but in a way that is “an acknowledgement of the meaning making function of human constructs” (Hutcheon 89).

In other words, historical narratives are open and not fixed to assume, and yet they can be read in a way of projecting the historical events to the current “literary culture” for the sake of being understood and dealt with, rather than read objectively in signs. Since the history borrows from literature, the historical events are inspired by the narratives in order to express the meaning that is determined by individual or groups not as an absolute belief, but as subjective analysis as far as their culture is concerned (Malpas 98).

Clearly, the grand narratives about the western powers, as colonizers, which were unfair and praised by the modernists, were forcefully challenged and rejected by the contemporary writings. Postmodernism chiefly believed in the diversity, humanity and freedom, consequently, it asserted that the voice of power is no longer heard and taken into consideration, declaring the resurgence of the new type of literature aiming to be the voice of voiceless which is called the “postcolonial” literature. Historians and writers, such as Homi Bhabha, supported the case the

marginalized and minorities whether were colonized country, black people or abused women in giving them the chance to express themselves through writing, and defend on what the western calls the “others” (99). Precisely, one of the aims of historiographic metafiction fiction is to “include a number of women and minority writers under the rubric “postmodernism” who had previously been excluded from the designation” (Sunny ix).

I.3.4. Metafiction

In her book, *Metafiction: The Theory and Practice of Self-Conscious Fiction*, Patricia Waugh defines metafiction as

a term given to fictional writing which self-consciously and systematically draws attention to its status as an artefact in order to pose questions about the relationship between fiction and reality. In providing a critique of their own methods of construction, such writings not only examine the fundamental structures of narrative fiction, they also explore the possible fictionality of the world outside the literary fictional text. (2)

The novelist William H. Gass, whose claim the ideas of philosophy should be fictional, came up first with the term metafiction, though the using of this kind of fiction was used before, mostly as self-reflexive fiction. the term metafiction is a flexible way of writing which essentially provides a textual conscious status of reading in which the reader is put in a position of exploring the meaning of the outer world in a text in form a playfully manipulated fiction, i.e. among many different kinds of literary writings that are concerned with writing fiction, as a contemporary term, metafiction aims to engage the reader into the world of the fictive work, for grasping his awareness that leads to their interaction to the respective material (2). Simply, metafiction in general can be defined as “fiction about fiction” (Lodge 206).

Since the postmodern theorists' concern was about the problems of exploring the meaning, they sought creating culture on the basis of human perspective of perceiving the world. Metafiction as a solution, took the advantage of expressing theories, be it philosophical, linguistic or literary, for fulfilling the purpose of their fiction, which was "self-exploration" through providing conventional devices such as "metaphor". What chiefly helps to acquire this comprehension of the outer world is the fluidity of the using language owing to the fact that knowledge always accompanied by the quality of language which isn't used passively and objectively, but rather the use of the systematic self-contained language that "generates its own meanings" clearly, as a result to the increased social and cultural awareness, leading to the that functioning language (3).

One of the solutions that the metafictional writing suggests lies in the way of representing the "world" according to one's particular work, however, there is, indeed, a created mode of uncertainty to make the reader aware of what has already presented not the real as such, but the fictional way so that can be a possibility of presenting the "world" in wide range of ways (4). Additionally, to clarify its nature, the contemporary writers were attracted to the writing of metafiction, adopting it as a mean of self-consciousness in attempt to reflect the postmodern culture to the individual. It is characterized by obtaining the satisfaction of the reader by making him part of the fiction, and intellectually qualified. On the other hand, it uses the realist conventional modes such as "character and action", but what specializes it as in the postmodern writing is the providing of commentaries and criticism about the work itself, that are used aside, so it can self-contained (Lodge207).

I.4. Historiographic Metafiction

The generalization of the truth by modernists, as an absolute and objective matter, paved the way to many postmodern historiographers and theorists such as Hayden White, Edward Said many others to show their dissatisfaction with those absolutes. Their arguments were that the facts change by time, and the majority of them may probably utter lies which empower those who tended to expand their influence through the grand narratives (Hutcheon, a poetic of postmodernism xii). Linda Hutcheon was among those postmodern critics who saw that there is no credibility in writing history objectively seeking of the so-called the “truth”, but, instead of that, writing history subjectively through narration is what creates it. She embraced the postmodernist principles, such skepticism and uncertainty, that made the postmodernist discourse paradoxically and contradictorily, to reject the modernist claims about the universalities as no longer presented in that way, dealing with history as such when she asserted that “In both fiction and history writing today, our confidence in empiricist and positivist epistemologies has been shaken—shaken, but perhaps not yet destroyed” (106).

As a consequence of what was preceded, the notion of the historiographic metafiction came to the existence. Hutcheon defines it as “well-known and popular novels which are both intensely self-reflexive and yet paradoxically also lay claim to historical events and personages” (5).

Postmodern writing is concerned with textual discourses, since the nature of fiction and history are from this type, the term is a combination of the two historiography and metafiction, where the former provides historical figures and events, the latter the self-reflexivity and consciousness. The use of this genre was not new to Hutcheon, it was precedently used by Umberto Eco in his novel “The Name of the Rose”, where he included medieval events and the deciphering of symbols to create a unique thriller, however the new touch of the postmodernism was spe-

cially in the “constant attendant irony of the context of the postmodern version of these contradictions and also their obsessively recurring presence as well” (xi).

Following the postmodern parodic photography about art that received a lot of criticism in the beginning, the HM was parodic as well, in which it parodized the history, and was criticized too, yet after a while, it became prominent in the postmodern studies, i.e. Hutcheon’s HM and postmodernism in general came under fierce criticism about the attempt of rejecting and denying history, however she challengingly claims that history in postmodernism is not meant to be rejected but to be reinterpreted from the present. In other words, the historiographic metafiction “subverts, but only through irony, not through rejection” (xii). This genre of demonstrating history in a conscious and self-reflexive style paved the way to a considerable cooperation concerning the level of assimilation, i.e. history is approvingly read in deconstructive way in which the correspondence between the reader and the texts is poor, and it cannot be as clear as part of fiction. As a result, the quality of language used draws the reader’s attention to the world in shape of narratives (Hutcheon, *the politics of postmodernism* 35).

The nature of the HM representation is not just on the basis of creating fictional plot, but also on the basis of expressing the world experience in general. The questioning of some critics about the difference between the realist approach of presenting the reality is in terms of discourse which means that historiographic metafiction as a part of the postmodernist studies, is concerned with the representing the world through a historical discourse, such as archives, covered by conscious fiction in harmony (36). Since postmodernism embraced the methods of rewriting history and the accessing to it through possibility, writers and novelists, such as Salman Rushdie and John Fowles, creatively tended to use a special representation of certain historical event in order to be depicted from deferent point of view, for serving a particular claim. For the sake of crystal-

lizing that creativity, postmodernist writers used some literary devices to strengthen the structure of narrating namely “unreliable narrators, multiple frames for the narrative, stylistic transformations, mixtures of magical and realistic events, and parodies of earlier literary and historical works, this sort of postmodern fiction sets out to challenge traditional ideas of narrative construction, verisimilitude and historical truth” (Malpas 101).

I.5. Symbolism

Symbolism is marked by historians as a philosophical and artistic theory started in the second half of the nineteenth century in French by writers like the poet Baudelaire, and then it extended to whole Europe and America, where which emerged as a reaction to naturalism and realism, then later, it rejected the science with positivism, and eventually took the lead as a literary movement. Symbolism became functional when artists and writers tended to involve the impressionism to express the mentality, mainly the subconscious of the person, its complexity (Goldwater 1).

A symbol is the use of a concrete object to represent an abstract idea. The word symbol is derived from the Greek verb *symbolleîn* (to put together), and the noun *symbolon* (sign) (Ellen). The discovery of its meaning presupposes a certain amount of active cooperation, there for, it is based on the convention of a group that agrees upon its meaning (Goldammer).

According to Finkelstein, the interpretation of symbols relates to three paths that lead to deeper meaning of the literary works. Indeed, Archetypal symbols which are a part of human experience that they are known universally and interpreted the same nearly everyone such as the cross for Christians which represent the attitude toward God. Besides, the colour white which is the symbol of purity that is known universally.

In addition, conventional symbols are to suggest the same thing to most people who share a same culture (Finkelstein).for instance, the sun for ancient Aztecs represents life while for Native American Indians represents deity ,or the rose suggests love in the culture of certain nations. More examples of conventional symbols, is the cross which symbolizes the Christianity for Muslims while it represents the goddess Mother Isis for ancient Egyptian mythology (Finkelstein).Moreover, personal symbols are related to the personality of each person. For instance, snake for a dreamer person who fears snakes is a danger while it would represent situation or person cannot be trusted (Finkelstein).

I.6. Conclusion

The emergence of the postmodernist theory opened the door to a lot of historians and writers to put everything was related to the modern theory of generalization that praised the absolute truths under the judgement of rejecting and doubting, owing to the fact that all human are incomplete and they can make limited claims. History, in particular, was produced in a new way, so that can be understood, a way of engaging the subjective view to be more analytical, and more vivid than the conventional objective one. Additionally, the postmodern historiography in order to state facts in a very interesting way, saw to retell history in a self-reflexive way, by drawing the attention of the reader to the consciousness of the fictive work, for providing an informative material through fiction. The upcoming is supported by this chapter, in projecting what was mentioned on the novel of The Da Vinci Code, i.e. postmodernism in general, and the focus will be on the notion of Linda Hutcheon's the historiographic metafiction.

Chapter Two

Postmodernism and Historiographic Metafiction

Implications in The Da Vinci Code

II.1. Introduction

The memory of history never forgets, even if the secrets are concealed, or the truths are distorted, by time they will be revealed. No one can deny the attempt of writers and fictioneers to change the reader's perception of some fallacies that have been embraced as aknowledge, precisely a belief, through their writings for increasing the probabilities toward the true thing that it might to be. In this context, literature witnessed more innovation and more new genres with the occupation of pioneers in conveying their messages, and controversially raising question about issues either through rewriting or retelling as the postmodernism does. Among the fictions that create a high conscious plot, and mind-blowing events is the writings of thrillers, especially if those writing were characterized by actuality and detection, which take the lead nowadays to be the top and most read genre. For further explanation, in this genre, a reader couldn't come across with an amusing pieces of writing that has mysterious and enigmatic dimension like Umberto Eco's novel *The Name of the Rose*, who was ahead of his time, until when the thrillers author Dan Brown was shown up in this field with his novel *The Da Vinci Code*.

This chapter is hopefully dedicated to the intended study of what has preceded in the previous chapter as a projection. The novel of *The Da Vinci Code* is suitably the primary resource in which I will analyze and deal with: first of all, the academic biography of the writer, secondly, the synopses of the novel and the plot, then I will include the postmodernist study with the use of some techniques such as fragmentation and intertextuality. Lastly, the other major focus of this chapter will be about the historiographic metafiction as a study to the self reflexivity and the reflection of the historical facts, again through the postmodernist perspective.

II.2. Dan Brown's Biography

Dan Brown, was born on June 22, 1964 in Exeter, New Hampshire. He attended Phillips Exeter Academy, where his father was a math teacher, and in 1986, he graduated from Amherst College, then he returned to Phillips Exeter to teach English. In 1995, his first book was published entitled *187 Men to Avoid*, a dating survival guide for women. In 2000, Brown wrote his novel *Angels & Demons* where he introduced Robert Langdon, a Harvard professor of symbology, and his novels became the best known for the Robert Langdon series. After two year, he wrote his next novel was *The Da Vinci Code* which aroused a lot of controversy over some theological and artistic beliefs, to be forbidden in some countries, after a while it was published all over the world to be one of the bestseller novels.

II.3. The Summary of the Novel

The novel is revolved around a crime happened in the Louvre Museum in France, where the curator Jacques Saunière was chased and murdered by the Opus Dei monk Silas for the place of the keystone, before his death, the curator had to desperately pass on the secret in any way he could possibly find. To do so, he rushed in writing using the invisible ink to leave digits and two lines, then he drew the pentacle symbol using his blood to make the shape of the Vitruvian Man. "The clarity of Saunière's intentions could not be denied. In his final moments of life, the curator had stripped off his clothing and arranged his body in a clear image of Leonardo da Vinci's Vitruvian Man" (38).

The professor of the religious symbology Robert Langdon is summoned by the judicial police of France to the crime scene in the Louver, because he was scheduled to meet the curator, to help them in this case, however, when he meets Captain Fache to discuss the symbols, Sophie Neveu the police cryptologist secretly draws the attention of Langdon as a suspect. She helps

him playing a trick on the police to successfully decode the concealed secrets left by the creator, who was Sophie's grandfather, to find the key of her grandfather behind the Mona Liza painting, then they escape toward the Swiss bank to uncover the secret. Under the chase of the police, they take the box from the bank by the help of the codes left to go to the historian Sir Leigh Teabing looking for answers, and Teabing by his turn starts to reveal the misunderstood secret of the Holy Grail showing that it is in fact a person not a cup, illustrating this point using Da Vinci's painting The Last Supper speaking about Mary Magdalene, claiming that Jesus was not a god, and the bible was distorted and rewritten by Constantine. Later on, they are attacked by Silas to take the keystone, but he is tied up, and is taken with them by Teabing's plane after the coming of the police.

Before they land in England to find the police await, Langdon opens the box to find another puzzle left called the cryptex, and clue to the to the Temple Church in London, by arriving they succeeded avoiding the police moving to the church where Silas is killed by the police, and it appears to that Teabing was the teacher who promised the Opus Dei to give them certain privileges, yet he soon gets caught. At the end of the story, Langdon deciphers the code that reveals that Sophie belongs to the bloodline of Jesus and Mary, to find her family alive in Scotland, and Langdon returns to France to discover that the grave of the Holy Grail is located somewhere in the Louver.

II.4. Postmodernist studies

Brown's main problematic is always raised about theology on side, and the history from the other, to stick to his role as biased, yet at the same time as a skeptic, consequently, the Da Vinci Code novel is seen by many literary critics as one of the best sample to discuss postmod-

ernism theory. Dan used some techniques in an innovative way to be celebrated as the postmodernism do, unlike the modernist one that laments.

II.4.1. Fragmentation

The novel contains set of chapters, one-hundred-chapter in exact, most of them represent a different place and position at the same time, yet in the falling action of the plot, chapters start taking one place and focusing on the results. For instance, you find chapter talks about the protagonist's life and deeds, such as Langdon, while the other chapter talks about the antagonist, such as Silas, which makes the novel dominated by the fragmentation on the level of chapters. If the reader goes deep, he or she will notice small fragments, each one refers to a certain dimension of a certain code be it religious, artistic, architectural or cultural, in order to create solid and a whole picture to understand the secret of the code which is the bloodline.

Flashback, on the other hand, was dominating the majority of the events in relation to certain character's experience for giving an overall view. Langdon in the crime scene came across many analytical codes triggering his memory to go back to either the lecturing in collage, such as the Fibonacci sequence lecture, or in the jail explaining the secret of the Mona Liza painting. The same as Sophie moving back to her childhood evoking certain things taught by her grandfather to help the deciphering codes.

II.4.2. Allegory

Brown included a lot of allegories in his work, mainly his characters to refer to a certain skill or characteristic of the person allegorized which is called the allegorical figure. In the novel, Leigh Teabing is a royal historian who helped Langdon and Sophie in recognizing the secret of the Grail and the sacred feminine through his expertise in history, is referred to Michael Baigent

and Richard Leigh who wrote the “Holy Blood and the Holy Grail” books depending on the secret documents that are mentioned in the novel (Newman 279). In addition, the other allegorical character is the curator Saunière, the one whom the story is revolved around, to refer to the priest François Berénger Saunière who found the Dossiers Secrets under the stone that supported the alter while repairing the church, then taking them to Saint Sulpice church to be saved (271).

II.4.3. Intertextuality

No text is an island and every work or literary masterpiece is a combination of genuine works and interrelated texts. Dan Brown has used many texts either taken from historical, artistic, or architectural works, and proved that his work stood as a postmodernist work featured by the use of “many literary-linguistic models: myth, legend, hagiography, apocrypha, tales, history, etc”(qtd. in Skorupa 54).

Brown in depicting the life of Leonardo Da Vinci depended on one of the real works in a form of diary which tells about his ideas and beliefs, as well as mentioning the name of the work that is called “La Storia di Leonardo” for the purpose of strengthening the information of his claim, and he puts it like this, “Teabing’s eyes turned mirthful as he motioned to the bookshelf across the room. ‘Robert, would you mind? On the bottom shelf. La Storia di Leonardo’” (Brown 311).

Da Vinci, whom all the novel is revolved around his works, has adopted a different trend of belief that wasn’t dominated by any kind of church restriction, sometimes works for the church by making sculptures, and sometimes shows his hostility to them. Through his wise character, Sir Teabing, Dan illustrated and said, “many have made a trade of delusions and false miracles, deceiving the stupid multitude”, and he added, “Blinding ignorance does mislead us. O!

Wretched mortals, open your eyes,” then finished it writing “Leonardo Da Vinci” as a reference to that book (194). The main ideas that can be understood in this context is that the church was very convincing in talking about salvation, and the empowering of the popes and the priests by God to rule everything, even the monarchy through deceiving the people and seizing their ignorance. Moreover, Brown through mentioning most of Leonardo’s famous work and how he was living in the middle of art and the domination of church, shows his admiration, obviously, he read his notebooks about his thoughts and ideas which were written in a very strange way from left to right as a left-handed person to be read just by mirror, and that was quite normal because most of them address who read them writing, “I teach the methods of reprinting it in order, and I beseech you who come after me, not to let avarice constrain you” (*Newman 56*).

Additionally, Brown took another path in showing the biblical role in turning this novel paradoxically to a religious one when the devote Silas recites every time a particular line of the bible, yet as a deceptive person, he tends to aggression as well as disrespectfulness when he was looking for the keystone in the church of St Sulpice and found a verse from “Job 38:11” which says, “hitherto shalt thou come, but no further” (108). This verse aim was to warn whoever looks for the keystone, but in contrast, the Opus Dei priest killed here responding whoever stands in the way of their affairs will die.

II.4.4. Deconstructive Reading

Postmodernist theory focused on all types of discourses, mainly the discourse of history on the level of credibility, which lies in the in the absolute truth that is rejected by the both principles relativism and skepticism, and the approachability of understanding that history. TDVC is

definitely a historical reference that depicts different histories, starting from real places, moving by artistic icons, ending up with further contribution through very systematic steps of decoding. The novel was obviously controversial due to the new ideas, at the same time, different point of views by religious and artistic people. In that context, Brown aimed to change the way history stating that “we are starting to sense the dangers of our history” (Brown 374), and focused as well as on the reason of people’s fallacy toward knowledge which is the language that can be relatively understood, and the incompleteness of whoever’s perception of knowledge as he wrote, “Misunderstanding breeds distrust”(39). This view point by Brown contributed later a lot of explanation for many facts in history that has been absorbed without a clear background through time.

II.4.5. Discursive Study

TDVC provides as well a discursive view of some historical facts, mainly the religious beliefs in order to dominate the people by seizing their ignorance to control. This discursive study was on the majority of versions of the bible that were distorted by the emperor Constantine for the purpose of ruling the people, then came the church and popes, yet the bible as a discursive empowerment was seen as one of the rejections of the postmodernism. Obviously, that explains why Constantine called for embracing the Christianity through building a lot of churches, and making a lot of crusade commissions.

II.4.6. Rejecting the Grand Narratives

Though Sir Leigh Teabing is the villain in the story, Brown through this character provides a lot of controversy about many beliefs embraced, asserting that, “History is always written by

the winners. When two cultures clash, the loser is obliterated, and the winner writes the history books which glorify their own cause and disparage the conquered foe. As Napoleon once said, ‘What is history, but a fable agreed upon?’ then he added, history is always a one-sided account” (215-216).

Indeed, history is not innocent. The victorious writes everything he wants due to the fact that he is closer to be trustworthy and believed. That narratives were taken to be in the favor of the of the empires and strong countries, especially the western countries that desperately tried to extend their power all over the world through killing and extorting, to be praised and seen as savior heroes. In this respect, the postmodernist literature, and the postcolonial literature as such, believed in the voice of the minorities and oppressed people in a biased stance to open the door for them to express themselves honestly. Additionally, through the wise and the historian character Teabing, Brown sees that the truth, if it is really exist, can never be seen from one angle otherwise it suspected, as Hutcheon says: “there are only truths in the plural, and never one” (Hutcheon 109). The Da Vinci Code was intelligently made using many language games, and many playful techniques in order to criticize the bible depending on history (Douglas 257).

In addition, another matter is raised to be dealt with which is the Christian religion that is embraced to be the true religion. Once again, the wise Teabing shares another secret about the religion, stating that in order “to rewrite the history books, Constantine knew he would need a bold stroke. From this sprang the most profound moment in Christian history... Constantine commissioned and financed a new Bible, which omitted those gospels that spoke of Christ's human traits and embellished those gospels that made Him godlike. The earlier gospels were outlawed, gathered up, and burned” (Brown 198).

That very controversial idea led to a lot criticism as an attempt to spread doubts about the Christian belief. The Christianity is considered as the first truth that majority of people around the world embrace, believing in the salvation of the Jesus as a God, in the study of theology.

Religion was denied by the postmodernists as an absolute believing the God is no longer the supreme power that controls the world to be replaced by what is materialist than everything is metaphysic. Brown put the Christianity under the microscope, maybe to show how agnostic he is, considering that since the source of that religion generates from, is suspected and fabricated, how can a religion like that to be taken as a belief. Even the attempt to be empowered or gain power takes targeting the main trends of the majorities they move toward even if they were shaky to enslave peoples' mind and body.

Postmodernism left no chance to religion to dominate anymore, and the cost was replacing it by the first world materialistic belief which is the secularism. Dan clearly paved the way to denial of the divinity of the Christ as a God, according to the Christians, and he is, as a matter of fact just a human when Teabing said to Langdon and Sophie astonishingly that, "... Jesus was viewed by His followers as a mortal prophet" (197). This assertion meant to be a small and logical with the fact that that divinity was gained through voting.

II.4.7. Metafiction

Protagonist Robert Langdon wasn't seen the first time in TDVC novel, but he preceded this work by *Angels and Demons* which has a unique plot that revolves around bizarre codes and events to be solved by Langdon as well. In order to make the events of the novel well understood and take some of the as a reference, the writer tended to brake the frame between the fictional dimension and the involved history drawing the attention to which thing can be taken for granted, to exemplify, Langdon and Teabing are the ones to put under the microscope. If the reader

looks closely in the first pages of the novel, they will see that Langdon was presented to lecture in the university of Paris as “professor of religious symbology, Harvard University” consequently, that profession is not exist even as a discipline, in Harvard university. Another point to speak about the books that the professor Langdon wrote are: “The Symbology of Secret Sects, The An of the Illuminati, The Lost Language of Ideograms”, and he added, “Religious Iconology” (6), all have no existence in reality as well, and they were used just for breaking the frame between the two dimensions in drawing the attention of the reader to the consciousness of the protagonist in telling and stating historical facts to demonstrate one kind of the metafictional writing. Additionally, Teabing is seen as the wise villain and expert in the Holy Grail studies, for that, his work was a royal historian, a rank which is not exist as well.

II.5. Historiographic Metafiction

In the storyline of TDVC, there were many historical stories and small plots, in which the reader can consciously notice that this fiction contains a lot of narratives. The HM with the postmodernism in general tends to rewrite history and retell from different way since there is no absolute truths, and history is dominated by both: the verisimilitude and the possibilities. History is not innocent, nor credible, so clearly cannot be read objectively otherwise is restricted and being filled with deconstructive issues, instead of that, postmodernism sees to impose the subjectivity on writing the history in order to provide complete comprehension to the reader. The historiographic metafictional writers relies on set of documents and historical tools, such as archives, to create a constructive eventful fiction on the one hand, on the other hand, to be a historical reference of facts to refer to by readers. As a matter of fact, Brown applied this technique of collecting data and contributed it as a self-reflexive fiction, so in his prefaces he put it as “all de-

scriptions of artwork, architecture, documents, and secret rituals in this novel are accurate” (Brown).

II.5.1. Woman as an inferior

One of the true cases that the HM struggles for is defending the minorities and their rights in speaking freely whether in the face of society, tradition or country. Clearly, among these issues that this genre, with the postcolonial literature, forcefully deals with is the woman who is seen as an inferior to man, and the most abused one. Dan Brown raised that issue historically, praising the role of women and how did they suffer by man’s power throughout two millennia in the story. Starting with Saunière’s pentacle drawn by him on his stomach and the other codes in order to be found by his granddaughter, which it is seen as a misunderstood mark of devil worship by Fashe while discussing with Langdon who asserted that the pentacle is the symbol of goddess and said, “The original feminine meaning is correct, but the symbolism of the pentacle has been distorted over the millennia. In this case, through bloodshed” (Brown 31). So that shows how woman was marginalized in history. In addition, the early ages of Christianity was full of cooperation and support from woman, and changeably the respect of Jesus to them (Newman 326). Over time, when Constantine ascended the throne, he tended to spread the Christianity in his favor, either erasing every sign says woman can be in power, or including symbols such as the pentacle into the Christianity, then demonizes it for the sake of making man superior to woman as the Priory of Sion believes (Brown 104).

Moreover, Brown highlights how the legacy of Christianity that was left is shaped in the woman in holding the royal bloodline, indicating the female protagonist Sophie Neveu. Going through many artistic icons that always in relation to women, Brown analyses the painting of the Last Supper with his character Teabing demonstrating the secret of the Holy Grail, of which em-

phases that it is not an object, but it is the sacred feminine Mary Magdalene. According to historians who analyzed the secret documents and shared the same claim, see the she escaped to France from the crucifixion where she was protected by the secret group the Priory of Sion in order to keep the bloodline of the Christ that the church wanted to get rid of as well. The Priory remained secret until the organization of Opus Dei which belongs to the Catholic Church, emerged and started to look for the bloodline at any cost.

II.5.2. Personages and Places

Historiographic metafiction differs from the realist fiction in terms of telling the history of a particular place, how it was made, or retelling the story of a depicted differently in a very parodic and ironic way. Also, it provides the chance of writing history according to a suitable angle was seen by the writer since history is the main issue that cannot be subjective. Sometimes the reader finds a fictional debate by the protagonist, or any character, with a historical figure or personage for the sake raising a question about something or problematizing a historical event such as in Doctorow's *Ragtime* (Hutcheon 85). And sometimes two characters discuss about something either secret to reveal or to draw the attention of the reader to abnormal historical issue. In this respect, Brown's TDVC tackles historical figures works, historical places and several explanations of a lot of fallacies. Dan Brown in his "fact" page, in speaking about the Priory of Sion, mentioned some figure whom are put on the microscope like Leonardo Da Vinci and Sir Isaac Newton.

Brown massively used the works of Da Vinci as if he was brought back to life due to the code that had left before he died in the Louver museum as a message to decipher. Involving all his works and codes that he used to play that were in favor of opposing the church, and for the sake of telling this historical figure, Langdon goes through what Da Vinci made as if he is travel-

ling in a time machine, by stopping by each object analyzing it, sometimes by him or by Sophie as a third-person contradictory point of view, sometimes by anonymous or omniscient narrator.

Da Vinci is considered as an icon through leaving his fingerprint in the world of art because of his enigmatic and playful works. Brown as a historiographer states different facts about each work his character passes by. firstly, the painting of the Vitruvian man, which Stonier took its shape before he died to be left as the starting step of the puzzle, in Browns interpretation, the circle around the man drawn was an establishment of the harmony between male and female in this world, showing the accuracy in drawing it using the golden ratio¹. Secondly, the Mona Liza painting is the well-known painting all over the world because of the strange smile and mysterious details. Saunière paid the last visit to the Mona Liza that represents the god Amon and the goddess Isis according to Brown, before he died, leaving the anagrams “so dark the con of man” in paving the way to the next painting. In addition, Leonardo’s next painting that held the key behind was Madonna of the Rocks, it was made according to the demand of the Duke of Milan to be given to the church, however, he drew it oppositely in frightening way (Newman 305). Lastly, the work that held the secret of secrets according to Brown was the Last Supper painting that was analyzed by the royal historian Teabing demonstrating through the dimension of the painting that the Holy Grail is Mary Madelyn, the sacred feminine.

Moreover, the other historical figure spook about was Sir Isaac Newton as member of secret group. Newton shared in the English Civil War against the monarchy of king Charles the first on the side of the puritan army, which indicates that he was brought up as a puritan and anti-catholic, believing the God and the Bible in the face of paganism worshipping as the wrong reli-

¹ A ratio of two numbers in which the ratio of the sum to the larger number is the same as the ratio of the larger number to the smaller. Provided by Merriam Webster.

gion according to his notebook. He was a sophisticated academic man interested in the alchemy and the physics on the one hand, on the other hand, he became a member of the parliament for supporting the society apart from the respect of the king William of Orange (184). To Dan Brown, Newton was one of the grand masters of the Priory of Sion, had a major role in protecting the grail, since he was against the Catholic Church that looked for the bloodline to destroy. Langdon on his way looking for the sacred feminine grave, passed by Newton's tump in Westminster Abbey hoping to find the grave, but astonishingly they didn't.

Brown in projecting the historical facts to support his fiction provided a geographical guide encompasses countries, hotels, streets, regions and museum, yet some of them were used just for the sake of mocking some French monuments. The main place, Dan used for building his plot is the louver museum where the first event took place, yet Brown, before Langdon getting to the museum, depicted the hotel of Ritz Paris, where Langdon was peacefully stayed in before the coming of the DCPJ² that later would be seen as inefficient department relying on the Interpol in looking for Langdon. On his way to the museum, Langdon ironically commented on the Eiffel Tower as the proper emblem of France, belittling French leaders such as Napoleon Bonaparte. Additionally, in describing "La Pyramide", Brown use the imagery device excessively to draw attention of the reader to how it was designed by the architect I. M. Pei using six hundred and sixty six panes of glass as the same number of the Satan (Brown 18), at the same time, to mock the French people concerning the foreigners' view to their art when Langdon thought that, "The French, it seemed, loved to ask Americans this. It was a loaded question, of course. Admitting you liked the pyramid made you a tasteless American and expressing dislike was an insult to the French" (16).

² Direction Centrale de la Police Judiciaire

The Louver museum is one of the most famous museums in the entire world owing to the encompassing of 65,300 piece of art, each one is an antique, and among these works there Leonardo's paintings such as the Mona Liza and Madonna of the Rocks which are exist in the Grand Gallery. Brown playfully chose the location of the crime in order to put art and religion under the microscope, in which he represented the art as superior to the religion, clearly, summoning someone like Langdon, as Brown fictionalized "Professor of Religious Symbology", to the Louvre is like a heaven to a normal man.

In his book that deals theology in literature "If God Meant to Interfere", Christopher Douglas sees that TDVC, among Reed's Mumbo Jumbo and E. L. Doctorow's The Book of Daniel, depicts history on both sides religious and artistic in an aware way, bringing the event of the story line as an actual and part of the history that, to Brown, was taken from historical sources, to be a fact. Consequently, he convicted Brown of distorting history, illustrating by Hutcheon's words when she argued about the nature of using the historiographic metafiction saying that, "among the consequences of the postmodern desire to denaturalize history is a new self-consciousness about the distinction between the brute event of the past and the historical facts we construct out of them. Facts are events to which we have given meaning" (qtd. in Douglas 330). The focus was mainly on the small neglected details rather than the overall details that later became agreed upon by the majority.

II.6. Conclusion

Though the attempt of Dan Brown to create one of the controversial masterpieces since the emergence of the postmodernist theory was successfully achieved, yet some of his claims were taken as a part of grand narrative, of which must be read skeptically, not took for granted. In writing such plot, Brown massively followed the postmodernist trend putting the corner stone: the skepticism and relativism in order to reject history and criticize the religion, then moved on making a discursive study to the bible as fabricated source for the sake of gaining power to rule seizing ignorance. Additionally, the use of the historiography in a self-conscious way, paved the way to raise some issues, among the woman abuse and the misunderstanding of many parts of knowledge on the level of art, religion and symbology.

Chapter Three

Symbolist Reading of the Da Vinci Code

III.1. Introduction

The Da Vinci code novel is full of symbolism, each symbol was used by Dan Brown represented a clue that led to decipher the codes left by the iconographer Saunière before his death in the Louver.

In this chapter, we will deal with some symbols mentioned in Dan Brown's novel, then we try to explain their meanings and how they were used by the character Langdon, Neveu and the expert Teabing to reach finally the reality of Holy Grail and other historical secrets.

III.2. Religious Symbols

One of the dimensions that the DVC novel is enriched in order to lead to reveal the secret which the whole novel is about, is the religious one.

III.2.1 The Holy Grail and the Blood

Leonardo Da Vinci probably one of the keepers of the Holy Grail secret, he has hidden clues in his art work. However, Dan Brown's novel explained the reality of the Holy Grail, when Teabing the expert told Langdon and Sophie about the secret hidden in Da Vinci's painting "according to the Priory of Sion, the Holy Grail is not a cup at all. They claim the Grail legend—that of a chalice—is actually an in generously conceived allegory. That is, that the Grail story uses the chalice as a metaphor for something else, something far more powerful" (Brown 142).

According to the expert Teabing who told Langdon and Sophie that the Priory of Sion kept the secret of the Holy Grail which is supposed as Christ cup used in the last supper, but actually the Grail physically looks like a chalice which is an ancient symbol for feminine refers to a

holy woman Mary Magdalene, then the cilice symbolizes the womb of Magdalene Bloodlines. In addition, Teabing went far in explaining the legend of the Grail:

Holy Grail is the literal meaning of Sangreal. The phrase derives from the French Sangraal, which evolved to Sangreal, and was eventually split into two words, San Greal."Holy Grail. Sophie was surprised she had not spotted the linguistic ties immediately. Even so, Langdon's claim still made no sense to her. "I thought the Holy Grail was a cup. You just told me the Sangreal is a collection of documents that reveals some dark secret. (Brown 142)

Langdon convinced them that sangreal meant the blood which is one of the secrets of the Priory Sion that has been kept the reality of Jesus and Mary's bloodline.

Furthermore, Langdon explains the relationship between the chalice or the Holy Grail and the Blade mentioned in the poem:

Langdon motioned to the papyrus in her hand. "Your husband's poem speaks specifically of Rosslyn, except it also mentions a blade and chalice watching over the Grail. I didn't see any symbols of the blade and chalice up there." "The blade and chalice?" Marie asked. "What exactly do they look like?" Langdon sensed she was toying with him, but he played along, quickly describing the symbols. A look of vague recollection crossed her face. "Ah, yes, of course. The blade represents all that is masculine. I believe it is drawn like this, no?" Using her index finger, she traced a shape on her palm. (Brown 394)

The relationship between the two that the Blade symbolizes the masculine whereas the chalice is a symbol of feminine which form together a fundamental unity that assures the human existence within a balanced world.

III.2.2. The Pentacle

The novel of Dan Browns started by the murder of the curator Saunière who used his blood to leave some symbols hoping his granddaughter might know the secret of the mystery, so Langdon and Sophie found the reality of the pentacle symbol written by Saunière's blood:

Saunière's left index finger was also bloody, apparently having been dipped into the wound to create the most unsettling aspect of his own macabre deathbed; using his own blood as ink, and employing his own naked abdomen as a canvas, Saunière had drawn a simple symbol on his flesh—five straight lines that intersected to form a five-pointed star. (Brown 32)

Dan brown described the scene where the curator was murdering by Silas and how he left the clues by drawing a pentacle are five straight lines to form five pointed stars. In addition, Langdon went far in explaining the reality of the symbol:

"The pentacle," Langdon clarified, "is a pre-Christian symbol that relates to Nature worship. The ancients envisioned their world in two halves—masculine and feminine. Their gods and goddesses worked to keep a balance of power. Yin and yang. When male and female were balanced, there was harmony in the world. When they were unbalanced, there was chaos (Brown 33)

Indeed, the pentacle was an ancient symbol used over four thousand years before Christ that was related to the nature worship where the world was divided into two balance power masculine and feminine.

II.2.3. Opus Dei

It is an organisation founded by Josemaria Escrivá, the Spanish priest in the 1930's. This international group has the full personal protection of the pope, its "dogma" is taking in conservative path. Opus Dei is one of the most overcast subjects to be put on the table of research, so many secrets about this group opened the door for the curiosity of Dan Brown in his novel to reveal one of the most secret in Christianity. Opus Dei is a Latin word means work of God". The Spanish priest Josemaria Escrivá lived in a very hard conditions since he was just a little child, this may be the reason why he has this kind of harsh leading actions (Newman 193).

The human being has limits in all his action and his way of thinking, i.e. no matter the level of his thinking or how much he is clever, still he is just a human being. This human being can not judge another one of his kind and here the dark side of this group can be clearly seen, because they see themselves as the God representative on earth and as the God word instead of taking the role of being messengers, therefore, that way of thinking is clearly appeared in this novel and from the very beginning when Silas killed the old man Saunière as a messenger of God that what the God wants him to do.

In addition, the character Silas was having a complicated personality due to the belief of his group "Opus Dei", he kept saying "pain is good" (Brown5) as a symbol of the pain of Jesus when he was on Cross.

In many occasions in the novel, the reader is going to see how this group is taking decision, horrible ones using the God words mistakenly. Dan Brown mentioned that, “two months ago, an Opus Dei group at Midwestern University had been caught drugging new recruits with mescaline in effort to induce a euphoric state that would perceive as a religious experience” (Brown27).

New man when he talks about this group, he said that they work as one big group as a good Christians but there is a life or under life that we cannot know about it. This group was questioned many times from the Catholic Church itself, the members of this group are forbidden to talk about the life within it (Newman 205).

These facts pushed Dan Brown to mention the activities of Opus Dei which symbolised the church darkness, the new members must follow the instruction of their priest without any question, also they must show the true will of taking the path of Jesus and hat was clear in the way the worship the God. One former members said the suffering he taste he would never wish to anyone.

Dan Brown in his novel tackled one of the tools that is used by the Opus Dei a lot, which is “cilice” that is used by Silas “His high fleeced instinctively causing the barbed cilice belt to cut painfully into his flesh” (Brown65). This tool is a band spiked metal meant warn around the thigh (Newman 24), this can be seen as the streaked rules of this mysterious group and a symbol for the torture that the humans must taste to clean their souls from the selfish desire, furthermore, it can be seen as a way of discipline.

III.3. Artistic Symbols

Besides the religious dimension, Brown creatively relied on many works of many artists to shape the novel as an artistic masterpiece in which the reader can notice the excessiveness of using the imagery device.

III.3.1. Mona Lisa

The famous painting of Leonardo Da Vinci Mona Lisa took a large space in the novel due to its symbolic value. In Dan Brown's novel, Saunière left a key before he passed away to his granddaughter Sophie. Mona Lisa for many researchers still resembles a ground where so many secrets lie, no one is sure about that they all agree that is a matter piece holding so many symbols and for Leonardo Da Vinci it was his finest accomplishment. Our two main characters Langard and Nueve this part had to reveal one of the hidden messages that was left by Saunière, this painting resembles a specific woman "Mona Lisa" this can be used as a symbol of beauty and a reference for the perfection, also it is carrying an implicit meaning. Besides, the writer wanted to say trough the character Langdon:

" Langdon told them, walking up to the projected image of the Mona Lisa on the library wall, "that the background behind her face is uneven."Langdon motioned to the glaring discrepancy. "Da Vinci painted the horizon line on the left significantly lower than the right.""He screwed it up?" one of the inmates asked. Langdon chuckled. "No. Da Vinci didn't do that too often. Actually, this is a little trick Da Vinci played. By lowering the countryside on the left, Da Vinci made Mona Lisa look much larger from the left side than from the right side. A little Da Vinci inside joke. Historically, the concepts of male and female have assigned sides—left is female, and right is male. Because Da Vinci was

a big fan of feminine principles, he made Mona Lisa look more majestic from the left than the right." (Brown 103)

When you see it from the left you will see it bigger than when you see it from the right side in order to highlight feminine interests. Furthermore, according to the novel another riddle when he meant to draw it in a way that can be seen as a combination of both male and female in other words it was a self portrait of Da Vinci and his artwork Mona Lisa. Langdon said, his Mona Lisa neither male nor female. It carries a subtle message of androgyny (Brown167). So, the writer believes that is the explanation why it is symbolic thing in the way to decipher the code. This painting is a ground where the researcher can find a harmony between male and female.

Langdon went far in his explanation when he went back to ancient age, he refers the word "Mona" and "Lisa" to two old Egyptian Gods which are "Amon and Isis" (Brown 199), Amon was the male and Isis was the female in this way he made the union of the two sex. Until nowadays still no one knows who is Mona Lisa to remain a secret and a symbol that cannot be seen from different perspectives.

III.3.2. Vitruvian Man

From the very beginning of the novel, this symbol is appeared to be the way that Saunière chose to die with, the Vitruvian Man, Langdon gasped Saunière had created a life-sized replica of Leonardo Da Vinci's most famous sketch" (Brown 40). Saunière draw a circle around his body too and that can be explained according to writer as a harmony of male and female as it was mentioned before in this analysis, the circle is a sign of "feminine and protection" (Newman 309)

The Vitruvian Man shows a man in a circle, this circle can interpret as the universe too and the as the center if this universe, furthermore it can present the beauty and perfection of the human body, also the character Saunière in this novel is a leader of a secret brotherhood in Christianity who has a secret mission which is protecting beliefs in this religion specially those secrets of Mary Magd alene. In addition, Saunière uses his blood to draw in way from the writer to send a message about making sacrifices with blood to protect any secret that can change the people's thinking of the Christianity, this pose was a symbol of sacrifices that must be done by male and female, then any imbalance of this harmony can bring a disaster.

III.3.3. The Last Supper

Langdon and the cryptographer Sophie used to analyse symbols in Da Vinci's painting the last supper, in order to discover some hidden clues that might helping them to reach the saunière's secret that wanted them to know. Indeed, they discovered that Da Vinci was one of the grand master of the Priory of Sion who knows the secret which was hiding in his painting, so Langdon and Sophie used their knowledge to decipher codes within the painting. Thus far, they met the expert iconographer Teabing who explained how Da Vinci could hide clues in his art work:

He's kidding, right? Sophie was staring at the most famous fresco of all time—The Last Supper—Da Vinci's legendary painting from the wall of Santa Maria delle Grazie near Milan. The decaying fresco portrayed Jesus and His disciples at the moment that Jesus announced one of them would betray Him (Brown 207).

Teabing continued explaining more to Langdon and Sophie saying that the central figure in the painting is that of Jesus who looks left as if he presented some gifts to the viewers, on

his right women appeared who was actually Mary Magdalene is the wife of Jesus, so Da Vinci code claims that Jesus and Mary Magdalene were married that they had children, the secret that the church wanted to cover up to protect divinity of Jesus.

In addition, the colour bleu in the painting symbolizes love, fidelity and faith, then both the colour red and blue represent the royal colour, in this case possibly suggesting the royal blood of Jesus and Mary Magdalene.

III.3.4. The Rose

Throughout the history, the rose has symbolised various meanings, the first ‘sub rosa’ or ‘under the rose’ symbolises secrecy or privacy:

"Sub rosa," Langdon said. "The Romans hung a rose over meetings to indicate the meeting was confidential. Attendees understood that whatever was said under the rose—or sub rosa—had to remain a secret." (Brown 178)

Dan brown through his characters Langdon and Sophie clarifies the meaning of “the under rose” which symbolises the privacy , so Sophie told them how her grandfather behaved when he had confidential issues by showing a rose that meant leaving him alone ,then Langdon explained how Romans used roses whenever wanted to keep secret .

The second meaning of the rose according to the novel is that the five-petal rose which symbolise the Priory of Sion when, “ Langdon quickly explained that the Rose's overtone of secrecy was not the only reason the Priory used it as a symbol for the Grail. Rosa rugosa, one of the oldest Venus, giving the Rose strong iconographic ties to womanhood. (Brown 178)

Langdon gives the symbolic meaning of the rose which has direct link with the Priory of Sion. It is also a symbol of femininity when Langdon mentioned that the rose ties to womanhood.

Furthermore, “the Compass Rose” is the symbol of which had been associated with maps and guiding souls in the proper direction, this what Langdon adds to explain more about the meaning of the rose:

In addition, the Rose had close ties to the concept of "true direction" and navigating one's way. The Compass Rose helped travelers navigate, as did Rose Lines, the longitudinal lines on maps. For this reason, the Rose was a symbol that spoke of the Grail on many levels—secrecy, womanhood, and guidance—the feminine chalice and guiding star that led to secret truth. (Brown 178)

The Rose was a symbol of the Grail on many levels secrecy, womanhood, and guidance.

III.4. Mathematical codes

In order to show how systematic of deciphering of the codes is, Brown provided logical ways by using the mathematics for the sake of being able to crack the codes that held the truth.

III.4.1. The Fibonacci Sequence

In the use of symbolism, even a number can be a language in a middle of world that is understood through the meaningfulness. Robert Langdon, the professor of symbology, in his adventure in the novel, comes across abnormal symbols which meant to be messages to a secret object, leaving always a reasonable explanation owing to the fact that he believes that everything hap-

pens around him is not a coincidence, and Dan asserted that, “coincidence was a concept he did not entirely trust. As someone who had spent his life exploring the hidden interconnectivity of disparate emblems and ideologies, Langdon viewed the world as a web of profoundly intertwined histories and events” (Brown 13). Among the lines Sonieur wrote before he died, was series of series of random digits that seemed complex, yet they indicated to something helpful in decoding another codes later. Those digits were “13-3-2-21-1-1-8-5”, they were obviously seen as normal numbers, but in a crime scene, everything is taken as a clue to solve the crime. These numbers are deciphered by the cryptographer Nevue where it appeared that it was the Fibonacci sequence, or in other word, the golden ratio which is explained as "a progression in which each term is equal to the sum of the two preceding terms” to be put in this way, “1-1-2-3-5-8-13-21” (51). Additionally, the number PHI, or the divine proportion, is derived from this sequence, and it was explained by Langdon as a flashback lecture in Harvard university, how it encompasses everything on this earth be it alive or an object, when he revealed “PHI in the architectural dimensions of the Greek Parthenon, the pyramids of Egypt, and even the United Nations Building in New York. PHI appeared in the organizational structures of Mozart's sonatas, Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, as well as the works of Bartók, Debussy, and Schubert” (80).

III.4.2. Cryptex

Another astonishing mathematical device that contains digits and symbols in order to protect a document or a valuable small thing, the device is called the “cryptex”. This device was used by Brown in TDVC as the object in turn protects the secret of all secrets that was left by saunière. The term cryptex was coined by Brown in his novel, showing that has made a wide research about Da Vinci’s works for creating a puzzle in a shape of novel to contain all kinds of symbols to lead to one truth. Since saunière was one of the admirers of Da Vinci’s works, he cre-

ated that tool found in the artist notebook to conceal secrets, as a higher member of the Priory of Sion, it became a communicative device between them, and it encompassed the other secret societies as well. Sophie to Langdon defining the cryptex that it was “a portable container that could safeguard letters, maps, diagrams, anything at all. Once information was sealed inside the cryptex, only the individual with the proper password could access it”(168). If anyone try to destroy the tool for getting what is inside, the information that is written on the papyrus paper will be damaged and melted, because it contains another small capsule of vinegar, when it is broken, everything is gone. On the other hand, to avoid destroying the tool, apart from having the password, it will take you approximately twelve million try to get accessed, because the formula to open it, must be the right five letters.

Using this mind-blowing device by Brown elevates the novel to a higher position in the thrillers and detective writings, also, it demonstrates how the mathematical factor shaped the use of symbolism in order to tell the reader that each symbol is systematically made according to logical facts, and the only way someone can reach a constructive conclusion is by connecting the dots congruently.

III.5. Conclusion

Through this chapter, the main symbols in the Da vinci code novel have been defined and analysed by giving more explanation and how they were interrelated each other that enabled Langdon and Sophie to reach reality and reveal many secrets in Da vinci's painting such as Mona Lisa and the Last Supper mainly the reality of Jesus and Mary Magdalene. In addition, the use of symbolism by Dan brown which gave to Da Vinci Code as a literary work a deeper meaning and gave the opportunity to enjoy reading through different interpretation.

General Conclusion

Postmodernism strived and thrived for dealing with discourses and texts by getting them closer to the reader through several applications. The *Da Vinci Code* can be analyzed successfully using the postmodernist theory that encompasses the destructive and discursive reading of what Brown came up with in the novel which also seems to have different inter-related texts in order to strengthen certain claim provided with facts, i.e. Brown sought to shape the postmodernist attitude, mostly in rejecting the absolutes such as religion, embracing the skepticism and relativism as the core of analysis.

Though the limited use of metafiction at the level of characters, using just the influential characters the protagonist and the antagonist of the novel, Brown deemed to retell history according to the postmodernist scope in terms of using the self-reflexive fiction to interpret what happened once in a subjective way since the ways of perceiving the world differs from one another. The historiographic metafiction contributed to make novel as a historical reference based on the probability and verisimilitude to function through detecting the other sides of the so-called truth mostly in a parodic way. Indeed, *The Da Vinci Code* provides the reader with an unusual sense of reconsidering the meaning of the world in relation to the reading of history as a guide, yet it might be also seen as a falseness just for the sake of creating a good fictional storyline.

Dan Brown inserted the symbolism in his work as a way of creating a historical storyline to be understood through gathering pieces of puzzle to end up having a new knowledge concerning dimensions such as the religious and the artistic, discarding what once meant a fallacy and misunderstood beliefs.

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