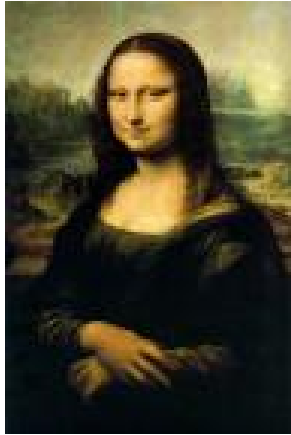


DECODING THE DA VINCI CODE

A Review of the Seminar by Prof. Grant Osborne, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School.

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Since the first century Christians have faced many challenges to their faith. Century by century each new heresy has forced us to articulate the truth about what we believe.

The book THE DA VINCI CODE is an engaging narrative of characters that try to solve the mysterious murder of the curator in a museum in modern-day Paris. The clues lie in paintings by Leonardo da Vinci, especially his Last Supper painting. Brown appears convincing but depends mostly on the flawed claims of one or two esoteric works. His book contains many **errors** in history, art, and biblical interpretation. These three areas are:

1. HISTORICAL ERRORS

The author advocates that the “holy grail” was the womb of Mary Magdalene, which held the blood of Christ or sacred bloodline as it held their child. However, the “actual”

grail stemmed from a twelfth century **novel** about the chalice (bowl) of the Last Supper. It was never connected to Mary Magdalene.

Brown says Emperor Constantine invented the deity of Christ at the Nicea Council (AD 325), but the Council only **affirmed** this teaching – it did **not create** it. While he claims the Council vote was “close,” in reality it was **297-3** in favor of upholding Christ’s deity.

Sun worship was not the ancient religion of Rome, as Brown asserts. It actually centred on **Zeus** and was **patriarchal** (not matriarchal contra Brown) as male gods dominated.

2. ART ERRORS

Leonardo’s supposed “enormous output of art” with “hundreds of lucrative Vatican commissions” is **false**. He actually had but one commission and few art works due to his varied interests.

In the Last Supper painting, is “John” on the right of Jesus actually Mary Magdalene? No, John here is depicted in the **typical** Florentine manner as the beautiful young man, with twelve disciples in four groups of three men each.

Brown’s idea of the Mona Lisa being a self-portrait of Leonardo himself is **ridiculous**; this is the wife/mistress of a prosperous merchant.

3. BIBLICAL INTERPRETATION ERRORS

Brown claims that Jesus married Mary Magdalene and together they had a daughter named Sarah, then the church made Mary out as a prostitute to hide the “truth” of their marriage. However, there exists no credible evidence or even a hint in the NT that Jesus ever married.

Further, Pope Gregory in the sixth century was the first to confuse her with the sinful woman who washed Jesus’ feet (Luke 7:36-8:2), so Constantine had no tarnished image of her to restore within the church three centuries earlier!

Brown’s claim that first century Jews always needed to marry is patently **false**. Members at **Qumran** valued celibacy, as did Judaism for one dedicated to the Lord.

Brown says Constantine invented the deity of Christ in AD 325. However, Paul and **early** creeds affirmed Jesus as God almost immediately (Rom. 9:5; cf. Tit. 2:13; Heb. 1:8-9; 2 Pet. 1:1; 1 John 5:2) and the gospels agree (e.g., John 1:1, 18; 8:58; 10:30; 20:28). **Second-century** church fathers concurred, such as Clement, Ignatius, and Justin Martyr.

The assertion that the supposed “80 gospels” were narrowed down to our four in the NT because of their patriarchal view toward women also is **untrue**. Actually, only 17 gospels were composed (e.g., The Gospel of Thomas, The Gospel of Mary, etc.) and all of these except our NT ones were from the mid-second to fourth centuries.

That Yahweh and Shekinah were male and female deities, respectively, is blasphemous – as is the contention that the sacred name “Jehovah” came from sex between the male “Yah” and pre-Hebrew female name for Eve, “Havah.” Actually, “Jehovah” resulted from a spelling error when the vowels of the name “Adonai” (Lord) were wrongly added to the sacred name of consonants only” YHWH. Thus “**Yahweh**” is **correct**. Further, “Shekinah” refers to God’s glory dwelling with his people as a cloud at daytime and a pillar of fire at night in Exodus 40:38. Nothing about these two terms relate being male and female.

The DaVinci Code contains too many other errors even to list here. While many may not

worry about these claims and dismiss them as fiction, Dan Brown boasts of his “extensive research” and the publisher claims the main aspects of the book are true! The New York Daily News even called the research “impeccable.” Such **errors** are amazing.

Brown has **rewritten** history based on **false** data. His main thesis should concern every believer: “Constantine and his male successors successfully converted the world from matriarchal paganism to patriarchal Christianity by waging a campaign of propaganda that demonized the sacred feminine, obliterating the goddess from modern religion forever.”

Simply put, Brown claims that Christianity was originally goddess worship, but this was changed two hundred years later. He implies that, to be truly Christian, believers today should admit that Jesus needed Mary Magdalene as a feminine consort and be involved in goddess worship today.

Brown depends heavily on the second-century heretical (Gnostic) The Gospel of Thomas, a patriarchal work that he misinterprets as matriarchal even though its final verse amazingly reads, “For every woman who will make herself male will enter the kingdom.”

The Gospel according to Judas is also not acceptable as it quoted Jesus as saying that the God of Creation is **evil**. It was basically written by a **philosophical** cultic group (Gnostic) calling themselves Christians, dated much later than the 4 Gospels of the NT that were eye witness accounts of the life of Christ. There was an allegation that John was anti-Semitic. This is amazing, in view of the fact that John himself is a Jew! It was also mentioned that there is a discrepancy

depicted in the 4 Gospels, that in one account Judas hanged himself while in another account, he jumped into a valley. But both accounts could be true. The robe could have easily broken causing him to fall into the valley.