



The Conspiracy Of Mary Magdalene And The Truth Of The Holy Grail In “The Da Vinci Code.”

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ABSTRACT

“The Da Vinci Code” by Dan Brown is the most controversial novel of 21st century. Many claims were made and the novel also got banned in most of the countries as it dug the hidden mysteries about Christianity which the church would never want to get revealed. Brown focused on the alleged marriage between “Jesus and Mary Magdalene” and gave several evidences for it in his novel The Da Vinci Code, but the Christianity itself rejects the facts given by Brown in the novel and tells it to be a false rumour because according to church there was no such thing .The analysis in this research is based upon the facts shown by Brown in his novel about the relation of Jesus and Mary Magdalene on the basis of historical facts and truths. Brown Claims that the research in the novel are accurate and completely based on actual document and sources. The Analysis will be on whether Brown's evidences are true or not and up to what extent.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Dan Brown is an American novelist (1964). He was very much fascinated about the truths and secret scenes which Leonardo Da Vinci left in his painting of The Last Supper. The curiosity of Dan Brown increased after the disclosure of so many things in the painting of Leonardo Da Vinci’s “The Last Supper” by his teacher

and hence he decided to write “The Da Vinci Code” after ten years. As soon as the novel got published, it created massive troubles for Dan Brown. He was accused and also charged for lying and forgery and people said that the novel is not based upon real authentic information and incidents. However, those who claim this novel to be a false evaluation of Christianity also regard this novel to be the great historical book even if the book has been rejected by the majority of Christian extremist.

The novel talks about the alleged marriage between Jesus and Mary Magdalene. There are several evidences for it which Claims it to be true. “The Da Vinci Code” by Dan Brown plots the evident structure of how the relation between the two stands to be true. Robert Langdon the key character of the novel is a huge scholar and a smart symbolist who is asked to solve a mystery murder of Jacques Sauniere (the grand master of The Priory of Sion). The solved symbols of the mystery death of Sauniere lead to the secret of the Holy Grail which was being protected by “The Priory of Sion” since ages and also gave the evidence of Jesus’s descendants who still exist and the Priory of Sion takes care of them. The church doesn’t accept the fact till date and it still is one of the biggest dark secrets of Christianity. Sophie the only female lead of the novel turns out to be the descendant of the Jesus and how it turns out to be true is all discussed in the novel. Brown in the novel has given many evidences to it. So through this research let’s find out how evident the facts are and to what extent.

The truths about the existence of Mary Magdalene (An overview)

Mary Magdalene is the Bible’s key witness to one of the most important events in history –“The resurrection of Jesus.” Without her, may not exist, yet we know almost nothing about the real Mary Magdalene (she is definitely the mystery woman). The early Church branded her a “whore”. Popular fiction recast her as the wife of Jesus and the mother of his child. But beneath the layers of myth lies a hidden truth that what really happened on the day. To some she is a prostitute forgiven by Jesus, the sinner who became a saint, to others she is the Holy Grail. The Gospels give very little detail about her saying she only supported Jesus and was once possessed by demons.

Mary Magdalene could be more than a relic of history except for one thing. The Gospel very rarely agree about who, was, where and when, whereas the four main Gospels say that Mary Magdalene was there at the time of crucifixion, hence the mystery woman plays an important role. The Gospels of Mathew, Mark and John they all tell that how Mary Magdalene was the first to see resurrected Jesus. The resurrection is the foundation stone of Christianity; the idea transformed the Jesus's movement into a whole new faith. According to the New Testament Mary Magdalene is the messenger who delivered news of the resurrection to the hiding male disciples, but then her job was done and she disappeared from the Bible. One of the big mysteries of the New Testament is "why Mary Magdalene is placed in a slight role and why they hide it and also why the Bible and the Christianity doesn't say much about Mary Magdalene?" Did the early Church have something to hide?

"In the Gospels of the New Testament Mary Magdalene" is the key witness to the resurrection of Jesus and her vision of origin. Jesus inspires the male disciples to claim that the leader has returned from death and Christianity is born. In the 16th century Pope agreed that the New Testament story of the three separate women in fact reflects just one individual Mary Magdalene. One of these women in the Bible is described as an unknown sinner, washing Jesus's feet with her tears and drying them with her hair. And in 1st century Judah only a prostitute would perform that in public.

For the next 1400 years the unnamed sinner and Mary Magdalene were one. Nowhere in the New Testament is she ever referred to a prostitute or a sinner. In 1969 the Catholic Church finally declared that Mary Magdalene was not a sinner and not even a prostitute. The evidences say that Mary Magdalene seems to come from Magdala. And she somehow also belonged to a royal family.

In the new testament only clue to why Jesus and Mary Magdalene came together is in the Gospel of Luke which states that Mary Magdalene was the woman from whom seven demons were cast out and mostly it is said that Jesus had exercised her.

In the Bible 7 is the perfect number signifying completeness. Yet only Gospel of Luke says that Mary Magdalene was afflicted by seven demons. "The Gospel of Mark" says that Mary Magdalene was the first

woman from Galilee of Magdala who supported Jesus financially (though women were not inherited the assets or money back then, so the question was where did she get all that from, but the evidences says she too was from a royal family and few believes her to be a prostitute) she had enough money for the movement of Jesus.

Did Mary Magdalene play a prominent part in the Jesus's movement?

Jesus was set on a collision course with Rome and the Jewish state and once Mary Magdalene joined him, there was no going back. But was she more than just a follower?

But then in 1945 a remarkable find near the town of Egypt changed everything. A group of local farmers were digging for fertilizer when there covered an ancient shield jar, inside they found 12 leather bound books. Among the texts, were Gospels credited to some of the disciples but left out of the New Testament.

The lost Gospel gave Mary Magdalene a former prominent role in the New Testament and one of the texts – “The Gospel of Philip” offered a shocking revelation about relationship between Jesus and Mary Magdalene. These included the writings of “The Gospel of Philip” and there were words missing from the Gospels of ancient Philip.

“And the companion of the _____ Mary Magdalene_____ her more than_____ the disciples_____ kiss her_____ on her_____ “!!

Scholars have been able to make a reasonable guess that what the missing words may be. If Jesus truly kissed Mary Magdalene anywhere on the body or on lips, in Philip as it is said it simply signifies a sexual relationship between the two.

So, Mary Magdalene hence is the most important key witness to the birth of the Christianity. Evidences from the historical records itself says this to be true the fact of relationship between the two (Jesus and Mary Magdalene). And if it wasn't true then the question is – why the church and the people never want to talk about this and why the historical ancient Gospels were hide and why the words in it are missing?

CHAPTER 2

Evidence of Jesus's and Mary Magdalene's Relation- Literature view

Before heading let's know that the controversial studies or agendas of the novel leads to the inaccurate and unacceptable facts about the Christianity and Catholic Church which was about the alleged marriage of "Christ and Mary Magdalene." So just have a look over the plot of the novel.

The entire plot of "Da Vinci Code" is mainly concerned with the alleged marriage of Christ and Mary Magdalene and about their descendants and the blood line which ultimately would be the Merovingian Kings of France. The Priory of Sion were the ones who took care of the holy blood line secretly till today and takes care of the descendants of the Christ.

The novel states that Jacques Sauniere "The Grand master of Priory of Sion" is killed by a mysterious man named Silas who works for a person who is addressed as "teacher" in the novel and later we come to know that it was Teabing who wanted to have all the secrets of the Holy Grail. The death of Sauniere leads to many mysterious religious symbols which he drew around his dead body as a clue to reach to the truth of Holy Grail before his death. As we see in the novel that these people of "Priory of Sion" works secretly but the Church don't want them to do so as they don't believe in the descendants of Jesus or we can say they don't want to admit it, so they kill the people of Priory of Sion so that the mystery would remain the mystery and never comes out.

Robert Langdon a great scholar and master of symbols was called for the investigation of the murder and to solve the symbols around it. Langdon and Sophie unlocks the secret and symbols given by Sauniere and reaches to a place where a safe box is kept in a bank contains the keystone 'a cryptex' which solves the mystery of the holy grail and further reveals about the secret woman Mary Magdalene and the alleged relation between her and Jesus and the histories related to it.

But the question rises - "Was it all true about the relation between Jesus and Mary Magdalene which Brown has depicted in his novel evidently?"

Let's have a look at an interview where Brown was attacked with the same question.

("Interview with Dan Brown" Sunday Morning (CNN). May 25,2003.)

Martin Savidge – If we talk about the book Da Vinci Code, how much you depicted is true and accurate in the novel?

Dan Brown –The entire background is true. The documents and theories that are put there are all accurate except the characters, they are fictionalised else everything is 99% true.

In an interview of NBC Today on 3rd June 2003 he said that the book is based on reality.

Matt Lauer - How much of the events of novel are factual?

Dan Brown –All of it. Robert Langdon is fictional, else the history, the secret society everything is real and factual.

And also further in an interview by Charlie Gibson on Good morning America in December 2003 , Brown states that the Priory of Sion, Opus Dei, The Holy Grail, Gospel of Philip, The Last supper and Mary Magdalene which has been portrayed in Da Vinci Code is true. He says that if Da Vinci Code had been non-fiction these theories would not have been different.

("Good Morning America (Host: Charlie Gibson)".)

CHAPTER 3

EVIDENCE OF JESUS AND MARY MAGDALENE

MARRIAGE – Historical record.

What we found interesting is that when Teabing says –some of the Gospels which Constantine tried to destroy and didn't wanted the world to know about somehow survived and was found which contains the earliest of the Christian records. So by such evidence he tries to tell or convince us. And now just because these Gospels have survived after several attempts of destroying it they will now tell us the truth of Holy Grail, the secret woman (Mary Magdalene) and also about Christ's humanity.

The lost Gospels gave Mary Magdalene a former prominent role in the New Testament and one of the texts – The Gospel of Philip offered a shocking revelation about relationship between “Jesus and Mary Magdalene.”

There were words missing from the Gospels of ancient Philip.

“And the companion of the____ Mary Magdalene____ her more than____ the disciples____ kiss her____ on her____”!!

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1. **The Gospel of Philip and the kissing.**

The extracts given below have been taken from the Gospel of Philip which reveals the kissing mentioned between Jesus and Mary Magdalene.

Flipping toward the middle of the book, Teabing pointed to a passage. "The Gospel of Philip is always a good place to start." Sophie read the passage: And the companion of the Saviour is Mary Magdalene. Christ loved her more than all the disciples and used to kiss her often on her mouth. The rest of the disciples were offended by it and expressed disapproval. They said to him, "Why do you love her more than all of us?" The word surprised Sophie, and yet they hardly seemed conclusive. It says nothing of marriage. "Au contraire." Teabing smiled pointing to the first line. "As any Aramaic scholar will tell you, the word companion, in those days, literally meant spouse. Langdon concurred with a nod. Sophie read the first line again. And the companion of the saviour is Mary Magdalene. Teabing flipped through the book and pointed out several other passages that, to Sophie's surprise, clearly suggested Magdalene and Jesus had a romantic relationship... Sir Leigh Teabing was still talking. "I shan't bore you with the countless references to Jesus and Magdalene's union. That has been explored ad nauseam by modern historians (266-7).

(The Vinci Code Teabing 59:00)

2. The last supper.

Teabing shows Sophie the painting of “The Last Supper” by Leonardo Da Vinci where we could see that Jesus is sitting right in the middle between his disciples. He asks Sophie to tell that how many wine glasses were kept on the table – she answers “one”. Now, but if we look closely to the painting of last supper there is no glass of wine kept on the table not even any container of it. But the gathering of the last supper according to Bible is the arrival of Holy Grail. (So what is the Holy Grail then, if not the cup?)

The symbols and the theories explained in the novel clearly justifies all the quest regarding the alleged relation between Jesus and Mary Magdalene. The ancient Christian history and it’s mysteries are all unfolded when we get to know deeply about the hidden truth of the “Leonardo Da Vinci's painting The last supper.” (The Vinci Code Teabing 58:00)

Langdon talks about the symbol of man and woman. According to Vinci’s painting the last supper where Jesus and one of his disciples (said to be Mary Magdalene) are leaning opposite to each other making a vessel shape between them. The triangle upward shape known as blade which represents aggression and manhood. And the female symbol is exactly the opposite which resembles like cup or vessel or more importantly shape of a woman’s womb.

So as per this evidence Holy Grail has never been a cup but an ancient symbol of womanhood. And in this case a woman who carried secrets so powerful that if revealed it would devastate the whole foundation of Christianity. If we look to the painting of the last supper closely we will find the person sitting right to Jesus shows perfectly feminine gestures (Mary Magdalene).

Well, in the novel when Sophie addresses Mary Magdalene as a prostitute (as per the ancient church claims) Teabing opposes her and says – she was no such thing rather she was Jesus’s companion (wife). Through the painting of the last supper we could clearly proof the relation to be true. Teabing in the novel also confirms that the picture where Jesus and one of his disciples are leaning opposite to each other clearly projects the picture of that womanhood symbol between them. But how one could get the confirmation of it

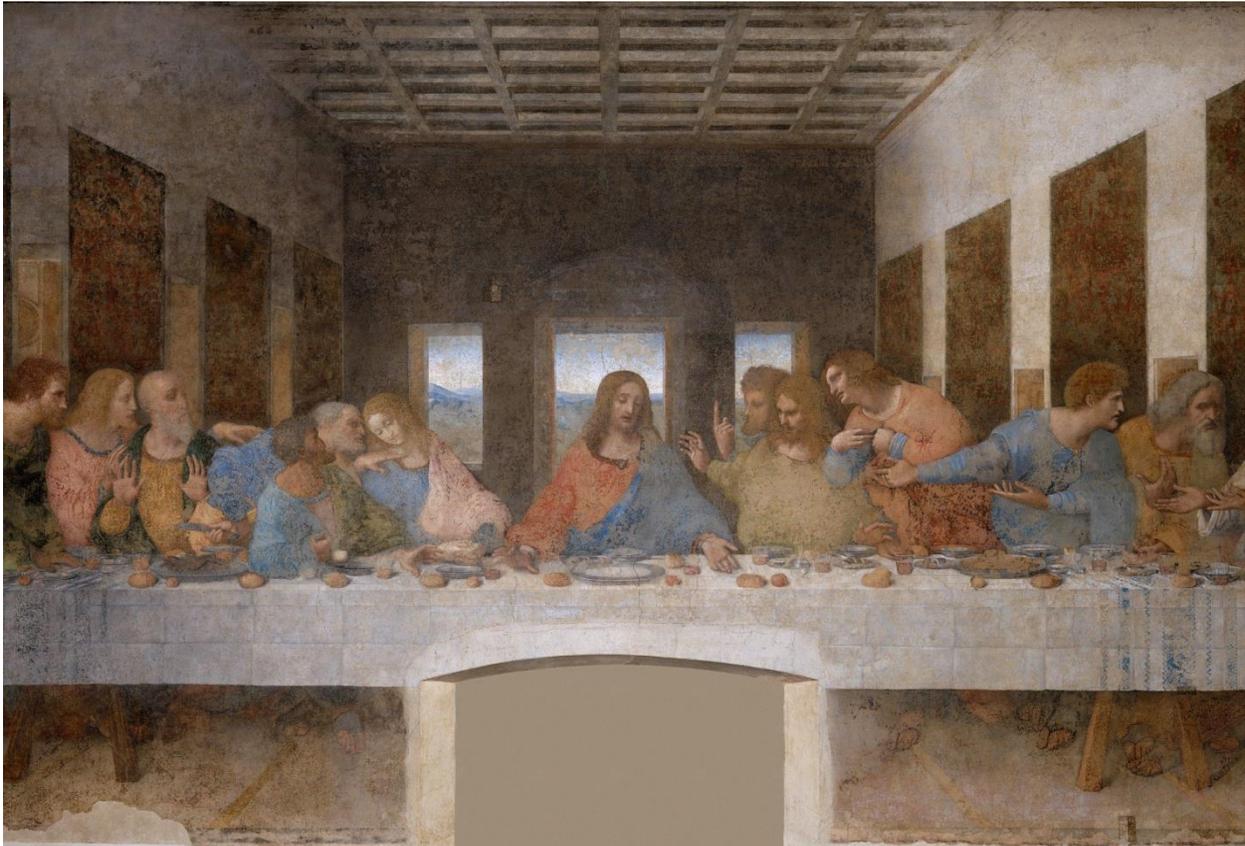
if it's true or not? Sophie in the novel also claims the same –Just because Da Vinci drew it, doesn't mean it's true.

But man !! The history...the ancient history according to the record says that it is true. And according to Gospel of Philip it is written there – “one of the disciples (Mary Magdalene) of Jesus whom Messiah loved the most among all the disciples.

But there are claims of no such marriage of Mary Magdalene and Jesus. But according to history it is believed that – At the time of Jesus, being with a female companion who is not from your family only meant to be a wife. Well talking of the evidences, this also has evidence in the Gospel of Mary Magdalene where it says – “And Peter said, Did Jesus loved Mary Magdalene more than us”?

To which one of the disciples said that – I think you are protesting against a woman , if Messiah has chosen her to be the most loved one , who are you to deny or question that “?

Robert Langdon in the novel also claims the same biblical reference to be true in order to prove the Vinci's painting The last supper to be more relevant proofs of Mary Magdalene and Christ's relationship.



The First Group's The Last Supper Represented by Leonardo Da Vinci's only 'the Original Painting

CHAPTER 4

The truth about The Holy Grail

The ancient history says that Jesus wanted Mary Magdalene to take care of the church after him to which Teabing in the novel also puts focus on.

It is said that in French The Holy Grail is said as “SANGREAL” which separates two different words and sangreal in French means – “Royal Blood”. But only few people know that Mary Magdalene was too from a royal family such as Jesus. According to history it is also said that Mary Magdalene was pregnant at the time of Jesus’s crucifixion and she ran away from Jerusalem to France in order to give birth to the child and there she delivered a baby girl named 'Sarah'.

Women were considered as 'danger' for the church and the church started to kill woman and burn them alive. The church also published a book named "The Malleus Maleficarum" where the priests were instructed to kill woman of independent thoughts.

Hence, the Church knew if they didn't do so the throne of Jesus would be passed on to his descendant (the girl child from Mary Magdalene) or Magdalene which was not acceptable to them.

Teabing also in the novel explains about the protectors of the holy grail – The Priory of Sion who are always 4 in number – one Grand master and the other three below him .And this is how Priory of Sion who from then till today took care of the descendants of Jesus and Mary Magdalene.

And this also concludes that Holy Grail has never been a cup rather it was Mary Magdalene herself the Holy Grail. (As mentioned above according to the painting of "The last supper" by Leonardo Da Vinci where there is no wine cup or glasses present on the table but the Bible claims the last supper to be the arrival of holy grail which ultimately points out it to be Mary Magdalene herself to be the holy grail).

CHAPTER 5

THE SABBATH DAY – AND JESUS BEING MARRIED and not a BACHELOR.

All of the Gospels focus on His indications of teachings, exorcisms, prophecies, walking on water, crucifixion, burial, resurrection and His miracles of touching people to heal them of pains and diseases like epilepsy, leprosy, rickets, blindness, bleeding, dumbness, His vision, the indications of His grave's guard by Magdalene, and the apostles' acts. He has absolutely far from the lifestyle related to marriage and family which would surely include nepotism." (Burger, 2005). He does not want even his followers to become a state power.

Thus, it is reasonable to reverse what Brown declares and say: Jesus as a bachelor man makes infinitely more sense than our standard biblical view of Jesus as a married man. And when Sophie asked about the reason for accounting him married more than bachelors, Langdon said, taking over while Teabing searched for his book that at that time the Jewish father must find a good wife for his son according to Jewish

custom and "celibacy was condemned". And because Jesus was a Jew, then he was definitely married. So, why there is not any indication for "his unnatural state of bachelorhood" at least in one of the gospels of the Bible if he was a bachelor! (265).

It is clear that Langdon's assertion of Christ's being a married man reveals Brown's deliberate attribution of Jesus Christ to Judaism which contradicts what the New Testament states. This is clear in Matthew (12:1-8) when once His disciples plucked the ears, crushed and ate them on the Sabbath day for they were hungry and He stretched out a man's hand also in that day. The Pharisee Faction protested since doing any action, except worship, in this day is considered a taboo and the leaders of that fiction decided to put Him to death since He broke the Sabbath taboo. So, if He is a Jew, then how is it possible for a prophet to break the Jewish religious taboo, mentioned previously, which states that all actions are prohibited on the Sabbath except worship and ease.

CONCLUSION

For the evidences given in the novel to justify the events has been rejected by most of the Christians and the church, so it is hard to establish such facts even one has proper evidence to it. Every coin has two sides and it depends what one chooses to be with. It's all about faith. But on the other hand the questions rise of why church always hide Mary Magdalene and her secrets and why they almost destroyed the rest of the Gospels which when found shows the evidences of Mary Magdalene and Jesus being together.

The church to this said that –In Christianity people kiss to show gratitude in worship or anywhere, even the disciples kissed each other to show gratitude evidences to prove the blood line and living descendants of Jesus. The ancient history and the church may know this all but never wanted to reveal and made it the darkest secret of Christianity. The Priory of Sion still exist and no one denies it and if we recall, the main concern of Priory of Sion is to protect the blood line and the Holy Grail.

Thus according to the novel, whatever Brown wanted to convey is off course controversial but if we give it a second thought we could see through it the hidden reality may be. The existence of Priory of Sion till date says a lot about it.

“The Da Vinci code” is a direct attack on the foundation of “Christianity” and hence is a very serious book. People read this book not because they genuinely believe it to be an absurd but because it unveils a myth somehow and allow the people to be religious without submitting themselves to any demand of faith.

The Da Vinci Code has an immense effect among the readers because it holds a matter of issues and secrets. After reading Brown`s novel the perspective of looking at the history definitely changes and how hence we conclude that now the present days need such innovative novelists who just not follows the conventional pattern of bringing out the history rather makes it a revolution. In short Dan Brown has justified his reputation as one of the most skilled thriller writer in the history of writing with his best book. So, as a literary work one should enjoy reading this novel for what it is.

NOTES

- Mary Magdalene was a Jewish woman who, according to the New Testament, travelled with Jesus Christ as one of His followers. She is the one who witnessed His crucifixion, resurrection, and the empty tomb. Alone or as a member of a group of women, she was the first to witness His resurrection. “Within the four canonical Gospels, i.e. of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John” she is approximately mentioned twelve times, more than the rest of the apostles. According to the Gospel of Luke, it is stated that seven devils had been cast of her (8:2). According to that of Mark, Jesus had cast seven devils of her (16:9). During the Middle Ages, she was considered in Western Christianity as a repentant prostitute woman. This information is not found in any of the four canonical Gospels.
- The Holy Grail is referred to as two forms. In early documents it is referred to as Sangraal; while the second form is Sangreal, as the author of *Le Morte d' Arthur*, Sir Thomas Malory's spelling states. One of these forms is the original. The word can be read in two ways, i.e. San Graal “Holy Grail” and Sang Real 'Royal Blood' which refers to the bloodline of Jesus Christ (and Mary Magdalene as many sources state) which led to their descendants, i.e. the Merovingian Kings of France. Alternatively, there is the Holy Grail, i.e. the Chalice which had been used by Jesus Christ at “The Last Supper.”

- The Vitruvian Man is a principle set by the Roman architect Marcus Vitruvius Pollio in his work *De Architectura* which implies a fact that good geometric and architectural proportions are based on the proportions of the human body if they, the proportions, are arranged in a specific way in terms of certain measurements. The Renaissance artists tried to apply this idea to a large extent though it clearly was not true and the results always led to distorted human figures. Leonardo Da Vinci avoided distorting the human figure by shifting Vitruvius geometry, i.e. changing the square and the circle in a way that each one of them does not fit the other. So, to be a Vitruvian man, the figure must be human including the square and the circle.
- The word Gnostic is originally taken from the Greek *gnosis* which literally means knowledge. Gnosticism means a principle of the religious duality, i.e. the good and evil powers equally rule the universe. The Gnostic Gospels are written about the apostles but were not by them. They, the Gospels, were included in a list which had been cut down more than one time. Finally, only four of them had been approved, i.e. “The Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.”
- The first group of painters in this study is represented only by Leonardo Da Vinci and his painting to be compared with the second group of painters and their paintings on which a large portion of analysing the data is based.
- As regards the second group of painters, among many, a number of paintings by the famous has been chosen to be samples for the analysis, comparing with that of Da Vinci.

PERSONAL NOTE

As a literature student, I enjoyed reading the text and the mysteries that the book holds. It is hard for any piece of work to survive this long after being such a huge controversial novel and also being banned in most of the countries. The histories and the facts has always evoked certain curiosity in every reader. Brown’s history in the novel is full of mysteries which was never dealt and talked before, as mostly claims it to be false. But all I could say is – As a literary work one should enjoy reading this novel for what it is.

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