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## Autoimmunity and the Terroristic Schemes in Dan Brown's *The Da Vinci Code*

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### Abstract

From a medical perspective, autoimmunity reflects the abnormal behaviour of a human being. This state is shaped when the defense of an organism betrays its own tissues. Allegedly, the immune system should protect the body against attacking cells. When an autoimmune disease attacks, it results in perilous actions like self-destruction.

However, from a psychological perspective, the French philosopher Jacques Derrida (1930-2004) explains that autoimmunity harms both the self and the other. As a result, the organ disarms the betraying cells, as the immune system cannot provide necessary protection. From a literary perspective, Derrida has termed autoimmunity as deconstruction for almost forty years.

Autoimmunity starts with the stage of a normal human feeling of doubt, in which a person can be cured through evidences. In this phase, the doubter is looking for answers and may be convinced when proof is shown. However, when doubt develops further it transforms into skepticism. Here, it is harder to convince a skeptic with proof because the feelings of pride, jealousy and bad temper are involved. Therefore, skepticism is more difficult to cure than doubt. When skepticism is left untreated, the sufferer becomes selfish and chooses violence. This leads to autoimmune diseases in which the person is ready to harm the self and others to obtain her/his goal. So autoimmunity revolutionizes the common human behaviour turning it into an animalistic one.

The aim of this paper is to examine Dan Brown's novel *The Da Vinci Code* (2003), to mirror how people should always expect autoimmune attacks in the future. The novel bears two autoimmune followers who should be a part of the autoimmune body. The follower is thus a cell that is a part of the body (the leader), but the body decides to get rid of what should be part of him.

*Keywords:* Autoimmunity, animalistic behaviour, the self and the other, political terrorism.

## Jacques Derrida's Autoimmunity

Several cases in the human psyche initiate unpredicted situations and generate unbalanced behaviour and thinking. A fair example is doubt, which is in fact the starting point of autoimmunity. Doubt is a phase in which a person echoes “a feeling of uncertainty” (Stevenson, 2010, p. 9692) which may be cured with strong evidences like visual proof. However, when doubt is left uncured, ignorant actions and thoughts may dwell in the doubter’s mind. In this case, doubt develops into skepticism, which is a phase wherein a person’s disbelief is strong. Here, s/he rejects almost everything, even when strong proof is shown. This is because skepticism bears the feelings of pride, jealousy and bad temper (Fleming, 1857). Such moods lead skeptics to problematic behaviour like verbal attacking, judging and criticizing. As a result, doubt can be eradicated with proof, which is almost impossible with skepticism, as a debate with a skeptic ends without results.

Additionally, sudden violence may arise when skepticism lurks within a person, through reflecting risky disorders that are mixed with hazardous hatred. Such situations give birth to dangerous skeptics who might harm whoever practices opposite dogmas. At this point, such hatred leaves the skeptic with the feeling of lust to harm others, even if it means s/he might harm the self. This mental sickness leads to a distorted immune system that cannot provide protection to the sufferer anymore. Therefore, the immune system fails the sufferer and allows outside attacks to damage her/him. Thus, autoimmunity is the opposite of immunity.

Autoimmunity is a philosophical term that identifies the unnatural behaviour of a person, in which an organism deceives its own tissues (Anderson and Mackay, 2014). From a literary viewpoint, this disorder is mixed with evil psychological illnesses that dominates in a destructive mode. So the self is attacked by the other and leads to the birth of an inappropriate self. In *Key Concepts*, the French philosopher Jacques Derrida (1930-2004) determines that “[a]utoimmunity refers to the inherent capacity of every immune system to turn upon itself and suicide, mistaking the self (the body’s own cells) for the other or the non-self (foreign antigens)” (2015, p. 146). Thus, the biological self malfunctions, causing the attacker to lose control over the self.

Autoimmunity is a cyclonic action that ends up in disorder, since it has a bond with life, death, survival, and self-destruction (McKim, 2019). It disturbs the sufferers with the thoughts of death, until they truly perform suicide at what they see as the right moment. When a policy does not nourish their interests, they use force to compel their own decrees instead. With such unconsciousness, they challenge contrasting strategies and believe that their system is more beneficial than others (de Ville, 2011). For this reason, Derrida responds that autoimmunity is an animalistic behaviour that leads to horrendous happenings in the future. Hereby, Derrida illustrates how the mysterious incident of 9/11 is an autoimmune attack.

This symbolic suicide has been planned by America itself. It has attacked its own people within the buildings through minions (the hijackers). Terroristic schemes of manslaughter that damage the self and the other at the same time are called “autoimmunitary movements. Which produce, invent, and feed the very monstrosity they claim to overcome” (Borradori, 2008,p. 99). Such guerrillas want to protect the self through autoimmunitary jeopardy that truly leads to overall chaos. Therefore, Derrida shares that individuals with an open autoimmunity have no future, as nothing good is to be hoped for when it comes to their own political thinking (Haddad, 2013).

Autoimmunity lurks as a hidden force within the human psyche and can be spotted through risky behaviour. It is an attack against the self, as others are automatically involved (Borradori, 2008). A similar autoimmune event can be detected in Brown’s *The Da Vinci Code* (2003).

### **Autoimmune Preys: Silas**

In the novel, the Teacher is an autoimmune head who misuses his followers. This state shows how the Teacher represents a body, as his minions symbolize his cells. Since the followers are part of the Teacher, the latter should protect them. Still, Derrida mentions that one must always expect betrayal through autoimmunity, even if by the closest person. The Teacher’s aim is to get his hands on the secret behind the Holy Grail. When the followers succeed to bring it to him, he starts his autoimmune battle against them.

For years, Langdon’s old friend Teabing has been researching the truth behind the Holy Grail. Together with Langdon and Agent Sophie Neveu, they go to Great Britain, specifically the tomb of the English physicist Sir Isaac Newton (1643-1727). There, Langdon should find details about the Holy Grail, but will be following the trap towards a shocking autoimmune attack. On the other hand, Silas is a loyal follower of the Teacher, who is also looking for the Holy Grail. The Teacher is a two-faced autoimmune head who makes both sides race towards the treasure. Whoever gets the Holy Grail first will be robbed of it and killed instead of protected.

Having experienced personal pain before, Silas utters how “[p]ain is good” (Brown, 2003, p. 7). In a flashback, the seven-year-old Silas witnesses how his father kills Silas’s mother because he sees her as a harmful cell for delivering an albino. Instead of protecting his wife as a part of him, he eliminates her to stop what he sees as further damage. With this bloody scene, Silas suddenly feels a demon controlling his body and stabs his father with a knife several times until he dies. Before autoimmunity strikes Silas as well, he returns the autoimmune attack and kills his father before he ends up like his mother. The father represents the body that should protect its cells; Silas and his mother.

Silas flees and feels rejected, lonely and lost. Such feelings form a hopeless skeptic, leading furthermore to autoimmunity. This stage is called ‘democracy to come,’ in which a sufferer transforms into a vicious person who attacks whomever opposes her/his beliefs (D’Cruz, 2008). The priest Manuel Aringarosa takes Silas under his wings, because he needs his help to build a church. For the first time, Silas feels forever in debt towards someone. Aringarosa needs the Vatican to protect the Catholic global organization called Opus Dei, which is attacked due to the misunderstandings that its followers have spread globally. That is why the Vatican has abandoned Opus Dei, and can no longer distinguish between the self and the non-self (Rosenberg, 2014).

The Vatican is seen as the body, it disarms the harmful Opus Dei that should be a part of. Hereby, the body does not recognize its own part and sees it as a stranger to its system. This state shows how the sufferer’s conditions become imbalanced, due to the disease’s control. Hence, autoimmunity is the dark side of immunity that puts both sides in a war, dragging other systems into this conflict (Anderson and Mackay, 2014). With the help of Silas, Aringarosa wants to be under the protection of the Vatican again, by building his own church.

Silas wears a spiked cilice belt, which is “a band of spiked metal meant to be worn around the thigh...and the barbs are extremely sharp. They curve so that they dig into the flesh like little fish hooks” (Newman, 2005, p. 14). With this torture device, Silas harms his own body to prevent sexual thoughts, as pain keeps him on the path of sacrifice like Christ. He is following the teachings of the priest Josemaría Escrivá (1902-1975). Silas thinks that the autoimmune attack of self-harm is an act of serving God. Thus, he is harming and saving the self at the same time.

Escrivá writes in his book *The Way* (1934) “Blessed be pain. Love be pain. Sanctified be pain...Glorified be pain!” (Escrivá 49). It is a work that influences readers to serve God through pain, which can be seen through the representative Silas. Derrida says that this autoimmune scheme is “a process in which, while seeking to protect and defend itself, a thing actually violates itself as the upshot of a violent non-recognition of the ‘other’ in the self” (as cited in Wortham, 2008, p. 176). Silas’s organism fails to recognize its own self, as the immune system responds against itself through autoimmune assaults.

While being under Escrivá’s influence, Silas informs the Teacher that he has details about the keystone. The Teacher makes use of this case and says that Silas is serving God. With such praise, the head (the Teacher) can easily control his cell (Silas). Instead of protecting him, the Teacher misuses his follower and is ready to disarm him whenever he feels betrayal or disobedience. Silas’s immune system is out of his control and cannot recognize himself.

Autoimmunity lets Silas fail the process of “discrimination between self and non-self” (Anderson and Mackay, 2014, p. 89). Silas also whips himself until blood drips

down his back. Through this autoimmune action, he wants to forget his negative past memories. Hume adds that when skepticism passes its borders, it pushes a sufferer towards extreme situations (Wheelwright and Fuss, 1963), like autoimmune actions. Silas believes that life is meaningless and full of sins, so he works for a better afterlife. Hereby, Silas thinks that he is nothing more than a sacrifice.

Self-torture is when “immunity and autoimmunity operate in any community mechanically, spontaneously, inevitably [...], not as a result of choices members of the community make or that the community collectively makes” (Arizti and Martínez-Falquina, 2007, p. 349). Thus, Silas’s self-torture is an autoimmune process that controls him “without necessarily resulting in disease” (Mutsaers, 2016, p. 44). He is at war with himself, because he follows Christ in a way that harms him. At the same time, he destructively follows Opus Dei. Some people think that the organization brainwashes pure people, because sometimes Opus Dei followers overdo matters and bring negative criticism against this organization .

A fair autoimmune example is when an Opus Dei follower once used his cilice for more than two hours and nearly died of infection. With this action, he harmed the self in a destructive matter while bearing the thought of saving the self from sinning. One should not harm the organization with such actions, but extreme thoughts of what they think of as protection may highly damage what they should protect. Another autoimmune example is when a member committed suicide after writing all his possessions to Opus Dei. Instead, he paved the way for criticism against the organization, with the thought of how it teaches one to harm the self in order to save Opus Dei.

When a person is brainwashed, s/he may harm the self to save the self at the same time. Similarly, Silas’s immune system is also both a friend and an enemy to his self. According to the Swedish philosopher Martin Hägglund (1976- ), autoimmunity “ties possibility to impossibility, success to failure” (as cited in Attridge, 2010, p. 139). This may cruelly damage a person and there is nothing that can stop it. Hence, an autoimmune sufferer is lost between life and death.

In Saint-Sulpice Church, Silas asks Sister Sandrine to leave him so that he can pray alone. She spies on him from a distance and sees that Silas breaks the floor, which bears a stone tablet with “Job 38:11” (Brown, 2003, p. 175). The nun realizes that Opus Dei is looking for the keystone that should lead to the location of the Holy Grail. The nun sees Silas’s horrific whipped back and the cilice, so she runs to get help against Opus Dei. Silas follows her after finding the Bible verse of “HITHERTO SHALT THOU COME, BUT NO FURTHER” (Brown, 2003, p. 176). He finds that the nun is contacting someone to inform them of Opus Dei, and humiliates her for being a nun who does not serve Silas in any religious way. The nun says that she cannot see Christ’s message in Opus Dei, so the angry Silas kills her.

Silas and the nun should protect each other because they both serve God but in different ways. This indifference does not serve Silas, so he decides to get rid of her before she harms him even more. This way, he avoids further damage and understands that it is the ultimate solution to protect the self from outer attacks. Silas counts the nun as a stranger to his system and chooses to protect himself against a harmful cell (Weller, 2008). Aringarosa hears about Silas's crime and realizes that the Teacher is betraying him and Silas. He decides to confess everything to the French police, in order to save Silas before he would perform more autoimmune attacks.

After each autoimmune attack, terror rejuvenates and reloads Silas for a new autoimmune action. This puts him in an endless cycle of his own autoimmunity suicide. His moods swing swiftly from one phase to another and feels lost, as he is protective and destructive at the same time (Arizti and Martínez-Falquina, 2007). Eventually, Silas is in a continuous chain between the past, present and future. He does not seek immortality, but wants to survive.

Silas meets Teabing's manservant Rémy who admits that he also serves the Teacher. They go to the Templar Church where Silas demands the keystone. Langdon will only hand it over if he lets Sophie and Teabing leave unhurt. Suddenly, Rémy interferes the scene by abducting Teabing, and Silas runs off as well. In the car, Silas gets a call from the Teacher who says how they both are men of God, while Rémy is not. To start his autoimmune attack, the Teacher wants to jettison Silas by sending him to the Opus Dei building. There, Silas realizes that the Teacher has misused him as a pawn in his autoimmune scam, not realizing that he is going straight into the mousetrap.

With this action, the Teacher is an autoimmune traitor who has told the police of Silas's whereabouts. This is the moment wherein the Teacher's misuse of Silas comes to an end. Silas loses self-control when officers burst inside. A bullet is buried below his ribs and behind him someone yells at him to stop. While in rage, Silas turns around and shoots the man. After their eyes meet, Silas screams in horror, realizing that he has shot his savior: Bishop Aringarosa.

Silas wants to kill the Teacher but Aringarosa tells him to forgive and pray. Refusing treatment, Silas leaves and accepts his autoimmune fate. In "Autoimmunity: Real and Symbolic Suicides," Derrida's says this eccentric behaviour is a "quasi-suicidal fashion, [wherein] 'itself' works to destroy its own protection, to immunize itself *against* its own immunity" (2008, p. 94). It is a double autoimmune attack in which the victim refuses to be saved and allows the pain to end his autoimmune disease forever. Later Silas is found dead in the park due to the bullet that has pierced him earlier. And so, an autoimmune head has got rid of an autoimmune cell.

Escrivá's extreme faith in God and the negative influence from the Teacher have turned Silas into an autoimmune terrorist. This shows Silas's narrow-mindedness, since he

does not realize that the power that affects him the most coerces him to perform autoimmune attacks. These assaults furthermore lead to the starting point of his autoimmune journey that ends Silas's life. Now, the Teacher wants to carry out his next autoimmune attack on his second target: Rémy.

### **Autoimmune Preys: Rémy**

Rémy has been Teabing's manservant for five years, and helps him find the location of the Holy Grail. Therefore, they join Langdon and Sophie to solve the keystone's codes. At the same time, Rémy is also the Teacher's follower. So both Teabing's and the Teacher's goal is the Holy Grail. As a weak-minded person, Rémy finds it problematic to stay loyal when he sees the treasure. As a cell, which is a part of the head of the system, it is up to him to choose between betraying his master and to cope with an autoimmune attack, or to stay loyal and fulfill every step that is uttered.

In the Temple Church, Rémy has an inner conflict when Silas wants to shoot Langdon who holds the keystone. Rémy wants to stop Silas from shooting, so that the keystone will not be shattered into pieces. The Teacher has ordered Rémy not to expose his face, but the manservant believes that he is capable of shifting his face afterwards, since money can change anything. It is true that he is promised freedom and money, but he decides to disobey the Teacher. Little does he know that "[i]n the name of democracy, democracy destroys itself" (Cisney, 2014, p. 226). In this case, democracy stands for the Teacher's self-rule, and Rémy should fulfill this to achieve the freedom that he seeks. Any attempt outside the controlling system leads to an autoimmune attack.

Rémy makes his move and hurdles to support Silas by burying his gun in Teabing's back. Langdon gives him the keystone, but Rémy abducts Teabing. With this behaviour, the callous Rémy is steering his own life towards an autoimmune attack. Now, the Teacher recognizes Rémy as a dangerous cell to his system and has to protect himself from this risk. When he wants to eliminate his prey, the Teacher has a malicious face that he reveals only privately. Autoimmune attacks take place when there are no eyewitnesses (McKenna, 1992). The American philosopher Claudia Card (1940-2015) defines such immoral behaviour as "foreseeable intolerable harms produced by culpable wrongdoings" (Schott, 2007, p. 4). As the head of the autoimmune attack, the Teacher has misused his cells Rémy and Silas. He should protect them, but now that he has the secret ingredient that will lead him to the Holy Grail, he plots to kill his followers.

Rémy meets the Teacher in the car and gives him the keystone. Now, Rémy thinks that he will gain freedom, but it is not the freedom that he has in mind. Knowing Rémy is ominously allergic to peanuts, the Teacher serves him a toast of cognac which contains peanut powder. The Teacher slyly reminds Rémy how he has promised him freedom. The murderer feasts his eyes on the scene, as the rigid Rémy is being murdered instantaneously. The Teacher is like an organ, while his followers are his cells, so if the



body harmfully attacks its own betraying cells it causes self-damage. It is “an immune response by the body against its own tissues or types of cells” (Chamberlin and Narins, 2005, p. 275). With this toxic autoimmune attack, the head of the system has disarmed a risky cell that brings him danger.

Gasping for air, Rémy finally realizes what kind of freedom the Teacher has been promising him. Afterwards, the Teacher is ready to carry out another autoimmune scheme.

The Teacher stepped from the limousine, pleased to see that nobody was looking in his direction. *I had no choice*, he told himself, surprised how little remorse he felt for what he had just done. *Rémy sealed his own fate*. The Teacher had feared all along that Rémy might need to be eliminated when his mission was complete... Nobody could implicate the Teacher unless Rémy talked, and that was no longer a concern (Brown, 2003, p. 533).

Derrida defines such a scene as an autoimmune behaviour in which the attacker reveals his true identity through autoimmunity. The terroristic Teacher sees it as democracy, while it is a danger that destroys what should be part of him (Dooley and Kavanagh, 2007). Derrida says that terrorism is paranoia that leads to autoimmune diseases in which cruelty “ends up in producing, reproducing, and regenerating the very thing which seeks to disarm” (as cited in Hu, 2015, p. 20). Here there is no freedom to choose, as the autoimmune attack moves accordingly to the Teacher’s system.

Derrida believes that autoimmune attacks are terroristic assaults that bear “unspeakable fear, panic and trauma” (Legrand, 2009, p. 486), which highly paves the way for other autoimmune attacks in the upcoming future. Such actions harm both the attacker and the others who get involved in the actions against their will. In *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, James calls people, like the Teacher, “sick souls, who must be twice-born in order to be happy” (2008, p. 120). After the Teacher gets rid of two harming cells, he feels that he is reborn again and that he is more powerful than before, since he has got the treasure in his hands.

The Teacher is glad that there are no eyewitnesses to avow his crime. He believes that killing the betraying cell is Remy’s fate. After disarming two of his cells, the Teacher wants to reload his final autoimmune attack against the remaining harming cells.

*One more loose end to tie up here*, the Teacher thought, moving now toward the rear door of the limousine. *The police will have no idea what happened... and no living witness left to tell them*. Glancing around to ensure nobody was watching, he pulled open the door and climbed into the spacious rear compartment... *Only two people now remain. Langdon and Neveu*. They were more complicated. But manageable (Brown, 2003, p. 533).

Autoimmunity grants a sufferer the power of persistence because the immune system is too weak to prevent her/him from making daring choices. This power pushes one towards autoimmune schemes, which influence the self and the other destructively. Autoimmunity damages all personal abilities like thinking, and offers the sufferer a sense of oppression. Hence, autoimmunity always ends up in a punishing result.

In *Rogues*, Derrida describes a behaviour such as the Teacher's as a "strange illogical logic by which a living being can spontaneously destroy, in an autonomous fashion, the very thing within it that is supposed to protect it against the other, to immunize it against the aggressive intrusion of the other" (2005, p. 123). This abnormal autoimmune lucidity is a step of self-protection and self-destruction, acting like remedy and poison at one go. It is a contradictory force of weakness within the structure, in which the self or part of the self is attacked. As an internal-external risk, the event is seen as a responsibility in the eyes of the sufferer (Long, 2014).

It has been easy for the Teacher to get rid of his direct followers, but disarming the remaining cells that are not under his control is a bit more difficult. The Teacher insists to plan for another autoimmune assault against the indirect harmful cells.

### **The Autoimmune Head: The Teacher:**

The Teacher has two faces; a deceiving one that helps him attract people to do his dirty job, and a dark natured one. His evil nature strives to eliminate even the closest people when he feels a dangerous aura coming from them. He loses self-control and does not feel safe around anyone anymore. With his goal in hands, he wants to wipe out every dangerous cell that stands in his way. Hence, he is ready for another autoimmune attack against his friends: Langdon and Neveu.

At Newton's tomb, the Teacher leaves Langdon and Sophie a note, announcing that he has Teabing. He forces them to meet him at the public garden, where Langdon sees the ugly truth: Teabing is pointing a gun at them. Derrida characterizes that there always lurks an evil voice in everyone, but it is up to the person to follow this evil voice or not. Evil finds its way into the ears of doubters and poisons the heart with problematic actions, causing the birth of an autoimmune disorder (Wise,2009).The two-faced Teabing is a malevolent wrongdoer who puts himself in danger whenever he harms his followers and friends. He paves the way for doubt to be developed into skepticism, and ended up in an autoimmune disease that is impossible to cure.

The American psychologist David Dunning (1950- ) explains that a person like Teabing has an "ignorant mind [which] is not a spotless, empty vessel, but one that's filled with the clutter of irrelevant or misleading life experiences, theories, facts, intuitions, strategies...that regrettably have the look and feel of useful and accurate knowledge" (as cited in Novella et al., 2018, p. 57). Ignorance is a major characteristic in autoimmunity. It

leads to the disorder of a sufferer's thoughts and does not want to comprehend other understandings. Therefore, Teabing refuses to follow other systems than his own, since he believes that his concepts are the only accurate ones.

In *Rogues*, Derrida believes that Teabing's case is about protecting the self "in the process of positing itself, by denying or disavowing itself; it is always in the process of autoimmunizing itself, of betraying itself by betraying the democracy that nonetheless can never do without it" (2005, p. 101). Hence, Teabing wants to improve all by himself instead of aiding others. He refuses his system to be betrayed again and so he betrays his friends before they would betray him. Therefore, Teabing is a slave to his autoimmune disorder and fails to protect those whom should be a part of him.

Derrida asserts that autoimmunity is a problematic war with the self when it tries to defend itself. The democracy is limited, and the relationships between inclusion and exclusion, and conditionality and unconditionally are undecidable that cannot be dissolved in a coherent principle (Thomassen, 2006). Teabing is thus struggling with the self and believes that he can protect the self by eliminating part of himself little by little. His relationships with others start out well, but end up in a damaging autoimmune attack that harms others before it hits the self.

Derrida explains how autoimmune sufferers are never safe because the system that they want to force upon others mostly hits the self first (Johnson, 2011). Teabing wants to misuse Langdon and Sophie like he did with Silas and Rémy. This cruelty transforms a person into a state wherein s/he is "ceased to be human; given that he cannot pass into a divine condition, he is turned into a wild animal" (Moorhead, 2018, p. 58). Now, self-control for Teabing is impossible because his mind is a prisoner to his cruel system. Derrida calls cases like Teabing's "repression in both its psychoanalytical sense and its political sense" (qtd. in Johnson, 2011, p. 4). Teabing does not care how to complete his democracy, as long as it serves him personally. He threatens Langdon with a gun and is ready to eliminate his friends if they refuse to cooperate.

In "Contagion," Mitchell writes that "[t]he whole theory of the immune system and the discipline of immunology is riddled with images drawn from the sociopolitical sphere—of invaders and defenders, hosts and parasites, natives and aliens, and of borders and identities that must be maintained" (2017, p. 11). Teabing is defending the self and feels that Langdon and Sophie are strangers to his system. Since ignorance takes over Teabing's mind, words cannot stop his autoimmune disease. He decides to throw the keystone towards Langdon and turns his gun at Sophie. With this action, Teabing wants Langdon to solve the keystone's riddles that should take him to the location of the Holy Grail. Instead, Langdon shatters the fragile cryptex into pieces. It turns out that the inside is empty, as the map to the Holy Grail is with Langdon.

Luckily, the French police bursts into the scene to arrest Teabing who shrieks like a madman. Every instant towards the future is like a circle that encloses around the psychopath until it takes advantage of the self (Stocker, 2006). In *Acts of Religion*, Derrida demonstrates that autoimmunity is the “principle of sacrificial self-destruction ruining the principle of self” (2002, p. 87). As autoimmunity is known to end up in suicide, Teabing does not have enough time to perform this action, so reflects insanity. Autoimmunity bears the feeling of pride, but Teabing ends up in a humiliating situation where the self can no longer protect itself. Indeed, after the French police is done with interrogating Teabing, the results are that he is insane since his true identity is only known by the deceased Rémy.

To sum things up, most autoimmune sufferers can never imagine the possibility of losing at the end, as seen with Rémy. He betrays the Teacher and still believes he can get the freedom that he has been promised of. The Teacher grants him freedom by killing him in return. Fearing that Silas might also plot against him, the Teacher decides to expel Silas as well. After he has saved the self from harmful cells, he is about to accomplish his last autoimmune attack against his friends. This time however, the autoimmune attack targets Teabing (the Teacher) himself. Even though autoimmune cases frequently end up with death, Teabing does not have enough time to commit suicide because the French police bursts into the scene to arrest him. Teabing pretends to be insane, so as not to surrender the self as a failure to his own murky autoimmune scheme.

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