

# Socio-Psychological Contemplation on Dichotomy in *Angels and Demons* by Dan Brown

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**Abstract** The dichotomy has a profound originality in the long history of human beings who gradually increase the recognition of objective and subjective world characterized by the subdivision with human biometrics and thinking initially, the sound language and symbol system of social thinking in the second place, and the macro and micro development of thinking cognition more prominently. Based on the novel *Angels and Demons* by Dan Brown, the characteristics of dichotomy is probed and interpreted, portraying the opposite depiction of angels and demons with the figurative display of character attributes, and further revealing the application and influence of religion and science. Through deepening the thematic ideas of the novel from the transformation of angels and demons, the socially neutral viewpoints towards religion and science, the attitude toward history and reality, the interpersonal relationship without merciless slaughtering and with more humanistic feelings, the unity of body and spirit, come into view. Eventually, it leads to the ultimate inquiry of being angels or demons, well worthy of deep reflection of value rationality socially and psychologically.

**Keywords:** *Angels and Demons, dichotomy, ultimate inquiry, psychological tendency, humanistic duality, value rationality*

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## 1. Introduction

With the publishing of *Angels & Demons* in 2000, Dan Brown began to write a series of novels including *The Da Vinci Code*, *Inferno*, *The Lost Symbol*, *The Digital Fortress*, *Origin*, and so on, which often feature themes of cryptography, secret organizations, and historical symbols, and have been translated into over 40 languages. Particularly his novel *The Da Vinci Code* in 2003 becomes a worldwide bestseller and is later adapted into a movie. His writing style and fast-paced storytelling have made him one of the most popular and successful authors of the contemporary era. Borrowing from historical events and sensationalized storytelling, he exerts his ability to blend fact and fiction in a captivating and entertaining way with Robert Langdon as the main protagonist, who is inscribed into a series of mysterious and dangerous events that require him to solve puzzles and unravel secrets. The themes of religion, history, and secret organizations run throughout his works and have helped to establish him as a master of the genre of conspiracy thriller attracting the imagination of millions of readers all over the world. As a result, Brown has received numerous awards and honors for his work, including the Bambi Award for Best Entertainment and the Corine International Book Prize. In addition, his books have been included on bestseller lists

around the world, including *The New York Times*, *The Sunday Times*, and *The Wall Street Journal* [1].

*Angels and Demons*, as his first representative of the "Robert Langdon" series, follows the story of Harvard symbolist, portraying a plot revolving around a series of events and symbols related to the Illuminati and the Catholic Church, as well as a threat to blow up the Vatican. Langdon is joined by a scientist named Vittoria Vetra and together they race against time to prevent the destruction and uncover the truth behind the conflict between the two groups. The novel features themes of religion, secret societies, and science, and has been praised for its fast-paced and thrilling storyline. Hereby, it's embodied and well worthy of reading and notifying from the confronting properties of antithetic phenomena in this novel, which outstretches deep into individual heart and wide onto social value.

## 2. The Social Origin and Development of Dichotomy

Human living environment and conditions determine the generation, content, and development of human thinking [2]. With the rich development of thinking under the social environment, there appear vocal language and carved symbol display system to express the thinking form. The questions of what language is and how it comes

into being have a long history, and their debate is so complicated and protracted that there is no satisfactory answer so far [3]. However, in terms of its social attributes, language evolves from social reality and is determined by its language environment and is gradually enriched within social communication. Language, by internalizing and functioning as a language of the mind makes us smarter [4]. A certain number of social groups communicate through early languages, and their sounds or expressions gradually become communication tools within a geographical area through language properties such as arbitrariness and regularity [3,5]. Language is the immediate reality of thought [6]. People's inner world can only form real things with the help of language, [7] which, especially the first language (L1), plays a crucial role in the cognition of thinking with direct and indirect effects. Aristotle calls it the sum of concepts formed by the action of all living and non-living things in the human brain, and the vocal expression of the sum of concepts developed into language. Direct language naturally divides into positive and controllable object expression of things and negative and uncontrollable object expression. Stoicism holds that "some things are within our control, while others are not, what frustrates us is not the event, but our view of the event." "Virtue is the only true good in life, and vice is the only true evil" [8]. Indirect, uncontrollable object expression includes conceptual imagination triggered by the environment, which later develops into one of the greatest human characteristics: imagination [9]. People's direct experience or indirect imagination is growing at any time, which further promotes the richness of language, that is, the natural and social attributes. The natural property of language is the true reflection of the living environment of language, including its language itself, which becomes the ontology of philosophy [10,11]; its social attributes are enriched by the diversity of people's social life, from vocal expressions to tangible expressions, from the meaning of a single sound to the complex and diverse language variants [5], from simple individual communication to large-scale group cooperation [9]. Language, as a kind of existence, is the sum of tools that people perceive, understand, and use to exert or interact with it and its object of expression. People live in the language [12]. Philosophy becomes a linguistic problem, confronting language and clarifying it with language [13].

Thinking is the inner thinking activity of human beings and the cognitive reflection of inner and outer conditions [14,15]. The field of thinking cognition of the world extends to macro and micro directions, and each has made outstanding achievements. In the process of the cognitive revolution of truth, pantheism is the primitive totemism of all cognitive objects [9]. Theism is more than the worship or fear of uncontrollable cognitive objects, and then develops into belief, and the extremity of belief develops into religious theory. Like Judaism in the Middle East, Christianity in the West, Buddhism in India, Taoism and Confucianism in China, etc., all have played a milestone role in the civilization of each region. Among all kinds of ideological activities, the most dazzling is the number of philosophical theories, exploring the origin of the world. From Thales' famous dictum "Everything is originated from water", to Leucippus' and Democritus' Atomism, to

Aristotle and other Greek philosophers, the branches of philosophy gradually spread into a dense forest of towering trees. The scientific spirit developing from philosophy is gradually mounting toward its peak. There are the subdivisions of the philosophical cognition of cognitive objects into three parts: physics, ethics, and Confucianism, or the tripartition of cosmology, theory of life, and theory of knowledge [10], which deepens the study of language and thinking cognition. Both the first philosophy and metaphysics lay the foundation for philosophy, finding out the logic in existence from the existence in logic, and finding out the logic of existence itself [16]. Hegel, a latecomer, opens the dialectical philosophy view from the logical starting point of "the big circle composed of countless small circles" [17], which pushes the critical thinking ability to a higher level and greatly expands the traditional philosophical research, a philosophy of reason, not a religion of faith, tradition or revelation. The dichotomy of matter and consciousness cannot be separated from Descartes [18]. The key to the abstract "truth" of philosophy is how to find out the nature and destiny that determines all existence. And existence itself, in some changeable invisible state, without omission, permeates any entity or form of existence, connotation, or existence [16,19,].

No matter whether it is in the micro or macro direction, the cognition of the objective world finally falls on human beings. It is generated with the generations of human beings for more than thousands of years. A certain object or concept is first expressed through sound language, and then symbols, which appear and form the signified object and interpretive meaning of symbols [20,21]. It is also expressed through specific language symbols -- characters, with their birth, whether in hieroglyphics or Pinyin characters, which is of great significance and far-reaching influence as stated in "Heaven rains millet, Ghost crying at night" [22]. In *Angels and Demons*, Brown shows the symmetrical features of English words in concrete symbols, perfectly combining form and meaning, and implying their origin and essence. Therefore, the novel has a wide range of tentacles, showing human development in micro and macro cognition with an encyclopedic description, separately posing the influences upon individuals' mindsets and social cognition convergence.

### 3. Angels and Demons

As can be seen from the novel's title and content, angels and demons belong to two opposite categories, which evolve down from the conceptions of the pantheistic period. An angel or a spiritual being, is usually a special protector of an individual or state, who is the lowest of the celestial hierarchy and typically benevolent [23], acting as an intermediary between heaven and earth, especially in Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Daoism, and Zoroastrianism. Demon refers to an evil or cruel spirit or devil [6,24]. Both words are used as religious or superstitious words. Although prehistoric religious thoughts and rituals are unknown only from cave paintings, pantomime, dance and recitation of traditional epics begin at the same time as people hunt, making religion become a part of growing up [25], and many

terms are borrowed from each other in the development of history. “Conquering religions often adopt existing holidays to make conversion less shocking. It’s called transmutation. It helps people acclimatize to the new faith. Worshipers keep the same holy dates, pray in the same sacred locations, use a similar symbology, and they simply substitute a different god.” (Chapter 61) While the Christian Bible is passed orally from person to person, the revolutionary progress of printed books in China made it widely spread in most parts of Europe and then all over the whole world [25,22].

Angels and demons gradually become familiar to the world. For example, Revelation and Genesis both mention different guardian angels [26], in which the Seraphim literally means the fiercest angel (Chapter 84). Angels are deities that surround God and bring God’s will to people. On the opposite side of the angels are the demons. When men cannot follow the automatic machine of nature into the spiritual and moral world, where it performs the same function as the physical function, all evil will arise, immediately returning to the old demonism [25]. Traditionally, the natural emergence of demons is due to natural birth and death, natural and man-made disasters, material scarcity, loss and failure, and deprivation. With the development of society, demons enter people’s spiritual and moral world. Moral sin, bad, evil, wicked, intrusion, and crime become demons of the mind. In the Bible, the demon snake is cursed due to luring Adam into eating the fruit and becomes a symbol of evil, and so are Adam, Eve, and Lucifer [27]. From a moral perspective, as Kant said, there is no conceivable reason, and moral evils first enter us [28].

### 3.1. The Images of Angels in *Angels and Demons*

The first angel depicted by Brown is undoubtedly the novel’s heroine, Vittoria Vetra. At the age of eight, she is abandoned by her biological parents, whom she has never met, and lives in a Catholic orphanage near Florence. She is so curious about nature that she would rather lie outside in the yard on a rainy day and feels the rain pounding her body. The nun keeps her out of the rain, threatening that pneumonia might greatly reduce her curiosity about nature. Leonard, a new priest, does not pull her into the house, but lies down beside her, dips his robe in a puddle, and answers her many questions. He adopts her and encourages her to attend Geneva International School. Three years later, she lives in CERN (Chapter 17), a wonderland she has never imagined. Years later, Victoria also becomes an accomplished physicist at CERN, closely related to her father’s work in particle physics (Chapter 14). After her father discovers antimatter, she suggests storing them in sealed nanocomposite shells with electromagnets at opposite ends (Chapter 21). Nothing like a bookish physicist, she is tall and slender, with chestnut skin, long black hair, and plump earthy features that seem to exude raw sexuality from twenty yards away (Chapter 14). Trapped in the Vatican, she manages panic, reassesses circumstances, and weighs options and needs (Chapter 37). In Chigi Church, she cares for Langdon, grabbing his arm, feeling his pulse, and her face like an angel’s (Chapter 69). In the Vatican’s secret archives, she

helps Langdon find Milton’s poem (Chapter 62) and an index of Bernini’s works (Chapter 79). Beside the fountain, she is tied tightly in her white flannelette robe with drawstring cinched tight highlighted her slender curves, like a Roman goddess or a heavenly apparition (137). Vetra is regarded as an angel goddess mainly for her love and pursuit of nature, and the preservation of caring love, for which she has received scientific breakthroughs and the romantic love of Langdon. On the other hand, after her father is murdered, she becomes a vengeful angel, from Switzerland to the Vatican, to find a killer, and finally to finish her revenge. The nature of the angel does not allow her to exterminate humanity, abandon virtue, and lose rationality and humanity. With Langdon, she kicks the killer out of the castle for her self-protection (Chapter 108), and questions and condemns the camerlengo behind the series of killings (Chapter 134). Finally, she, full of virtue and beauty, becomes the lucky and happy angel of the world.

Religiously speaking, those devotees who believe in God sincerely are angels. Firstly there are the Pope and Mary. When they are young and fall in love, they have taken a vow of celibacy and never even thought of breaking their covenant with God. Later, due to the desire for a baby, they use the science of artificial insemination to make it possible for them to have a child without having sexual relations (Chapter 133). Then there are many believers, especially the four preferiti. None of them lose their faith in God when they are locked up by the killer. Cardinal Baggia remains fearless in the face of the killer, praying for his soul (Chapter 97), reminding himself that this is nothing compared to what Jesus suffers, even as he is bruised, his chest seared, and in pain when he is pressed into the water. Seeing the killer drowning Langdon, he blames himself for his sin (Chapter 103). Finally, there is the papal chamberlain Carlo, who calls himself Janus. Of course, only when he’s on the good side, he is an angel. His religious devotion is unmatched. He spends the first ten years of his life with his mother, a nun, going to mass every day in the church, which is regarded as his home, and remembers his mother’s words never to break his promise to God (Chapter 47). He’s very good at bonding with people. When talking to Vetra, he voluntarily shares his secret as an orphan and is adopted by a priest (Chapter 83). For Vetra, who does not know her biological parents and regards Leonardo as her father, these words are the easiest to touch her. For Chartrand, the recruit who arrives at the Vatican, by chance, he encounters and invites him to take a walk. They don’t talk about anything in particular, which makes him immediately feel at home. What impresses him more is the answer to his question of why omnipotent and benevolent God do not change the tragic situation of mankind and prevent suffering. The camerlengo responds with the analogy of a father teaching his son to skateboard, saying, “although you have the power to interfere and prevent your child’s pain, you would choose to show your love by letting him learn his own lessons” (Chapter 89).

Another angel is the hero Langdon, who is very knowledgeable and eager to learn. Among many religious semiotics experts, he is selected by Kohler, the director of CERN. Seeing the symmetrical word ILLUMINATI that he has been dreaming of day and night, he resolutely steps

out to help decipher the secret of the Illuminati (Chapter 1). He also explains Kohler and Vetra the development of religion (Chapter 9), the meaning of symbols (Chapter 11), and the history of the Illuminati (Chapter 19). He is wise and courageous. Though he is claustrophobic, he sets foot on a plane in a confined space for the secret of symmetry (Chapter 4) and in Vatican secret archives (Chapters 45-47), and deduces the locations of the four bishops' murders one by one from Milton's poem. Then he risks his life, gets shot in a church, sealed in a coffin, and almost drowned in a fountain. He fights against the killer in a lair and goes through many hardships. He is also a man of love and humanity. Langdon engages with his students, knows them (Chapter 21), and teaches interesting and enlightening classes (Chapter 49; Chapter 61), and on weekends talks about techno graphics or the history of religion (Chapter 1). He also has a good relationship with colleagues, especially more popular among female colleagues (Chapter 1). Later, after witnessing the powerful antimatter and Vetra's grief, he accompanies her to the Vatican all along the way (Chapter 32). When Olivetti objects to the search for the antimatter canister, Langdon shows the photographic proof of its authenticity (Chapter 36), and consoles the depressed and grieved Vetra (Chapter 45). To decipher the four elements, he works hard and tiredly; to save the cardinals, he goes to the dangerous places bravely and hardly gets killed several times (Chapter 91; Chapter 93; Chapter 103); to rescue Vetra, he ventures alone into the killer's lair (Chapter 108; Chapter 110); to help the chamberlain throw away the antimatter canister, he resolutely boards the helicopter (Chapter 122). Langdon is a warm, loving man, so it's no wonder that the killer exclaims he must have a guardian angel (Chapter 107). Not that he has a guardian angel, but that he is his angel because God helps those who help themselves.

### 3.2. The Images of Demons in *Angels and Demons*

The vilest demon is undoubtedly the man who calls himself Janus, the two-faced god, who hides his dark and evil side with a white face. He is the papal chamberlain who does not show his tail until Chapter 129. There is no demon from its birth, nor does it happen overnight. From little to older, He grows up deeply in religious baptism but is traumatized after his dependent mother is bombed to death. After witnessing and experiencing the cruel reality, he believes that this is a world without faith. He tries to bring people back to the path of justice through horror (Chapter 134) and makes people believe in religion again (Chapter 131). He gradually moves from an extremity of a committed believer to the other extremity and adopts his own plan at the moment of shrinking religion dominated by science: using the Illuminators, hiring a killer, stealing the anti-matter canister, poisoning the Pope, trapping the bishops, and scapegoating Kohler. Finally, he becomes the God of destiny, the new leader of the religion leading the religion out of its dark hour. Contrary to the Pope's views, he poisons him with an overdosed heparin (Chapter 81). His plot is revealed only when the survivor Langdon plays a video of his secret talking to Kohler (Chapter 129). After learning the truth about his parents (Chapter 133), he,

wishing to be a hope, becomes an evil and a horror and commits himself to God by burning himself on fire (Chapter 134).

The Hassassin is a demon, too. His killing methods are cruel and vicious. To attract attention, panic, and horror, he brands Leonard's chest with the symmetrical word ILLUMINATI, digs out one eyeball (Chapter 17; Chapter 23; Chapter 25), and uses pupil scan to access the underground storage and steals an antimatter canister. In Chigi, Cardinal Abner is imprinted with the symmetrical word EARTH on his chest (Chapter 67; Chapter 69; Chapter 79); in St. Peter's Square, Cardinal Lamaset is pierced in the chest and branded with the symmetrical word AIR (Chapter 75; Chapter 79); In the Church of Santa Maria della Vittoria, a naked Cardinal Guidera is seen dangling from his arms to the point of being torn apart by cables high on either side of the ceiling. The charred emblem on his chest is the brand of the symmetrical word FIRE. The flame below is burning from the soles of his feet, and the victim screams in pain, his body trembling, being roasted alive (Chapter 91). The killer also knocks out Vetra and tries to shoot Langdon (Chapter 93). In Piazza Navona, Bishop Baggia, another victim, is also branded with the symmetrical word WATER and wrapped in heavy chains, one of which bisects his mouth half like a horse bit (Chapter 102). The killer also fights Langdon in a fountain pool (Chapter 103), until he is forced into the water and has to play dead by using the bubbling air in the fountain (Chapter 104). The killer returns to the castle and tries to violate Vetra. In the end, in the fight, the killer falls down the castle to his death (Chapter 108).

## 4. Science and Religion

The novel mentions another pair of dichotomic entities: science and religion, which bring a huge influence upon the socio-psychological development. The separation of science and religion has long been doomed for a long time. Up to the 17th century, science and religion are closely linked, and the establishment of heliocentricity marks that they turn onto completely different tracks of development. Their systematic researches and studies start in the 1960s [29], and they are still under hot debate at present.

*Angels and Demons* is full of scientific wonders. Science advances exponentially so that there are many miracles. Macroly speaking, there are medicine, electronic communications, space travel, and genetic manipulation. Science may have alleviated the pain of disease and drudgery and provided a range of inventions for our amusement and convenience (Chapter 94). For example, Langdon drives a Saab 900S car and flies from the United States to Switzerland on a Boeing X-300 plane at Mach 15 supersonic speed (Chapter 4). Helicopters, space, and other new things come out one after another. In contradiction, microscopic explorations of particles unearth a different wonderland. CERN begins the studies of particles, and establishes the large colliders to separate various particles, such as Z-particles (Chapter 15), atomic bombs, matter and antimatter, retinal scan, and the reproduction technology of artificial insemination. Science has become the foundation of modern society, and its

technological miracles have become deified, replacing religion as a new god (Chapter 94). On the other hand, there are negative effects of scientific development, such as scientific weapons with mass destruction or damage. The exploded bomb causes the death of Carlo's mother, and his hatred towards weapons and science then. When he serves in the military full of guns and bombs, he refuses to shoot (Chapter 47). Later on, he is more distrustful of a more lethal antimatter explosion. Science can cure and can kill (Chapter 83). Science destroys us, whose promise is not fulfilled. Promises of efficiency and simplicity have bred nothing but pollution and chaos. We are a fractured and frantic species, moving down a path of destruction (Chapter 94).

Although the science is advancing rapidly, with the explicit goal of some scientific organizations to promote science free of religious dogma [29], science cannot yet explain and solve all the problems. Their intertwined complexity has brought forwards a great influence on religious people and science pursuers in philosophy, theory, and practice [30], such as Leonard's attempt to integrate religion and science in the novel (Chapter 18).

The other antagonists shown in the novel are Carlo and Vetra, both of whom are baptized in church when young, but Carlo chooses religion, but is swallowed by hatred, and maintains his inner religion through poisoning and assassination. Vetra turns to science, attending an international school, and working at CERN. What's more, Kohler, who is also physically disabled, is extremely domineering. The dual identity of Illuminati members, as well as the Pantheon of worship, is the devil's house reveal the unity of opposites.

## 5. The Novel's Dichotomous Socio-Psychological Thoughts

### 5.1. Opposition and Unity of Angels and Demons

The novel expresses that good and bad, virtue and vice permeate human beings and are not invariable. In some cases, angels may turn into demons, while demons turn into angels. Without definition, evil is chaotic, vibrant, destructive, and full of possibilities. Without isolation, evil is everywhere, deep and hidden, seeping into every nook and cranny and wrapping itself around roots and arteries until it cannot be separated from the good [31].

After her father is killed, Vetra is filled with hatred and swinging moods, including anger, crying, depression, and despair (Chapter 14). Langdon, a towering water polo player and learned Harvard scholar, has a secret Achilles' heel — claustrophobia, the result of a fall into a deep well, and has never overcome the nightmare (Chapter 14; Chapter 75). Later, he tends to panic only in confined, small spaces, such as the X-Space plane (Chapter 14), in the elevator (Chapter 15). The similar transitions are especially true of the papal chamberlain Carlo. If his plot were not revealed at the end of the novel (Chapter 129), it would not be exposed that he is the master called Janus at the back of intrigue and conspiracy. Janus is the god with

two faces, the gatekeeper of the Roman Heavenly Palace, who is in charge of the day and night on earth, and the god of the beginning and the end of a year. The two faces represent the past and the future, and at the same time, he is the God of war and peace [32]. Later, his name comes to referring to duplicitous figures. So Carlo, by naming himself Janus, is taking the two-faced image to the extreme.

### 5.2. The Neutral View towards Religion and Science

From the long historical perspective of the development of religion and science, they both have played a crucial role in human development, and have yielded rich literary achievements divided into different sub-fields of science and theology, even the related cross-disciplinary fields [33]. In today's world, there needs a more inclusive and broader attitude with a globalized research perspective and diversified attention fields, which is the way for all things to coexist. Just as Vetra's spiritual problem "Do you believe in God?" surprises Langdon, he has never thought about it before. Although Langdon has studied religion for many years, he is not devout. He respects the power of faith, the kindness of the church, and the strength of religion to many populations. For him, if someone really wants to believe, he must temporarily suspend doubt intellectually, which is always too big an obstacle for his academic mind. Having faith requires a leap of faith, the brain accepting miracles. Then there are ethical standards so that he has to live by a specific code. [34] Otherwise, he will go to hell. He can't imagine a God who would rule that way (Chapter 30). Langdon studies history, quite familiar with religion and science, at least in his professional field, compatible with both in life, learning, and work [35]. From a neutral perspective, religion and science can be viewed as two distinct and separate ways of understanding the world. Religion seeks to explain the meaning and purpose of existence, often through the use of faith and belief in a higher power or divine being. Science, on the other hand, seeks to explain the natural world through empirical observation, experimentation, and evidence-based theories. While some may see religion and science as incompatible, others may view them as complementary. Langdon holds that science is a way to understand the natural world and religion is a way to understand the spiritual or moral aspects of life, enriching all cultures. Now religious beliefs are seen as providing a moral and ethical framework for scientific inquiry. As a Harvard professor, he acknowledges that religion and science have different approaches and methods for understanding the world, and that individuals may hold their own personal beliefs and perspectives on how the two can interact or coexist with consonance [7].

### 5.3. To Respect History and Facts, and Oppose Conspiracy Theories

The male protagonist, Langdon, is dedicated to studying symbology and has mastered a wealth of historical materials at his disposal. For example, he knows clearly many details of the history, characters, places, events, and viewpoints of the Illuminati. In order to

further research and access first-hand materials, he has repeatedly applied to the Vatican's secret archives but is always refused by the librarian, Tomasso (Chapter 49). He becomes an expert in the symbolic field and is selected by the director of CERN through the internet (Chapter 2) to help find the killer of Leonard. Based on his knowledge, he enters the maze room, identifies Galileo's book, and searches for the markers of the Illuminati. With the help of Vetra who discovers four lines of the poem left by Milton (Chapter 54), he interprets the implications of the four elements: earth, air, fire, and water. Although there are many difficulties in deciphering, they eventually succeed. He knows many famous members of the Illuminati and firmly believes that they are pacifists and do not use violence to fight against the tyranny of the church (Chapter 2). When others misunderstand the Illuminati, he explains and insists on his own opinions, and does not accept and announce their existence to the world through violent means like murder. When Kohler faxes him a photo on which a corpse is imprinted with a symmetrical word Illuminati, and claims it was done by the Illuminati, he deeply doubts (Chapter 1) and thinks that these obvious symbols and signs are ridiculous and the way of saving humanity through destroying the church is a cruel irony (Chapter 46).

Meanwhile, Carlo, a figure full of conspiracies, is doomed to perish. Conspiracy theories often arise from a lack of information or understanding about a particular event or situation, which can be fueled by misinformation or disinformation and can spread quickly through social media and other forms of communication. He makes use of the Illuminati's secret of four symmetry words and social media from all over the world, like BBC, to spread the horror and his fame. With accurate and reliable information that counters the false narratives and claims made by Carlo, the truth is discovered by Langdon, who has critical thinking and media literacy to identify and reject false or misleading information. As a university-researching individual, he makes it successful how to evaluate sources of information, fact-check claims, and avoid confirmation bias. Ultimately, ending a conspiracy may be difficult, especially if it has become deeply entrenched in a particular group or community. However, by promoting transparency, accuracy, and critical thinking, it is possible to reduce the spread and impact of conspiracy theories over time.

#### **5.4. To Emphasize Strong Physique, and Oppose Merciless Slaughtering**

Socially speaking, humans have a strong physique by building up and joining many sports, which is beneficial for physical and spiritual conditions, not for killing. As a professor at Harvard University, 45-year-old, Langdon retains the swimming sport. A varsity diver in prep school and college, Langdon still has the body of a swimmer, a toned, six-foot physique that he vigilantly maintained with fifty laps a day in the university pool (Chapter 1), which keeps his aging soul young. The nickname Dolphin refers to both his affable personality and his legendary ability to dive into the pool in water polo matches and outsmart the entire opposing team (Chapter 1). It is these traits that he fights with the strong and merciless killer in the fountain

pool and eventually escapes. Even when Langdon faces the killer, he is not willing to carry a handgun (Chapter 58), and in Piazza Navona, he does not shoot the killer with a handgun, but only threatens him to give in (Chapter 102).

Oppositely, the killers are known for their cruel killing. As their reputation spreads, these deadly people have become synonymous with death. So the assassin is hired to carry out a series of assassination missions. He is skilled, powerful, agile, and kills secretly (Chapter 5). He is loyal to his employer and all arranged assassinations are completed, which causes great horror to the surrounding people.

#### **5.5. The Unity of Body and Spirit**

Humans are a unity of body and spirit. On the one hand, body is a material condition of the regeneration and the mindset. On the other hand, spirit is a higher pursuit of humans. They affect and depend on each other and together form the attributes of a person. Due to gender differences, a male's strength is highly praised while the physical advantage of a healthy and plump woman, seen as having good fertility, is a symbol of a female's physical beauty [36]. In the novel, the strong body of Langdon wins praise from many colleagues. A stripper promises him the best sex of his life (Chapter 1), which is the fundamental bodily desire and pleasure. The novel also describes the figure of Vetra: not very pretty, but with plump and earthy features, even 20 meters away emitting a primitive sexiness. When the air hits her body, her clothes stick together, highlighting her slender torso and small breasts (Chapter 14). The killer is also someone who values physical pleasure (Chapter 10): looking at the sleeping woman next to him, touching her neck, strong fingers encircling her throat, savoring her pulse (Chapter 18). After catching Vetra, he treats her as a spoil of war and eventually makes her submit, cutting her throat. He calls it the ultimate pleasure (Chapter 105). The fall of the body will inevitably lead to self-destruction, and the fate of the killer has already been determined. Therefore, regardless of religious belief or scientific spirit, humans possess a healthy body, pursue spiritual creations, and reach the sublimation of the soul. It's better to be a person who is detached from lower-level interests, and who wants to be a noble person [37]. Pure mind and noble soul pursuits are always the main melodies of the day from individual mindset to society value.

#### **6. Conclusion**

Dan's *Angels and Demons* directly and literally portrays the attractiveness of dichotomy: a division or contrast between two things that are considered to be completely different or opposite from each other in a wide range of fields, such as philosophy, politics, culture, and science. In cognition development, the dichotomy branches into macro and micro directions; in philosophy, a common example of a dichotomy is the body-spirit problem, the division between the mental and physical aspects of human experience; in morality, there is a division and gap between good and bad, noble and evil, right and wrong. Dichotomies can be useful in helping people understand complex issues by simplifying them

into two opposing categories. However, they can also be problematic if they oversimplify the issue and fail to capture the nuances and complexities of the situation in reality. Langdon recognizes that many issues are not simply black and white, but rather exist on a spectrum or continuum. Understanding these shades of gray can help us develop a more nuanced and comprehensive understanding of the world. The ultimate inquiry of angels and demons is a philosophical and theological question that has been debated for centuries. The question centers on the existence of these supernatural beings and their role in the universe. Angels are typically portrayed as messengers of God, guardians, and protectors of humanity. They are often associated with good and are believed to help guide individuals towards righteousness. On the other hand, demons are often portrayed as evil, malevolent beings that seek to corrupt and harm humanity. In Dan's novels, he has not only created angels and demons as purely mythical beings by imagination, but also believes that they are real entities that exist in a separate realm or dimension, like human beings.

Ultimately, the inquiry of angels and demons is a matter of faith and belief. While there may be evidence to support their existence or non-existence, both ends of dichotomous elements and essences conflict, compete, and change, which both bring onwards and forwards huge development with achievements. In the flourishing knowledge and information exploration age, man's existence with contradiction and unity is facing challenges. Why and when humans transform into angels or demons can undermine the worldly extreme emotion and merciless hatred and killing. Angels run for good and bring benefits to beings. Based on only the desire for basic needs of clothing and habituating, beings tend to share with others or ignore extra materialized needs. When humans step onto the journey of finding more food and turn into the next forest for more collecting and hunting, all kinds of desires come into being and swell. Then demons follow after the heel. At such a moment, a man is not the demon, according to the author. No man is perfect and is allowed to have good wills and big desires, like Langdon and Vetra. An educated or cultivated man can bring the desires under control, and run for good will by the proper means without hurting other people, the nature or the community. Once the desires are out of control, they can swallow the host. When the stronger bully the weaker by a physical condition, or the smarter tantalize the others by intelligence full of killings and plots, a man changes into a hobgoblin with mind-ghost, plumbed deeper and deeper into the abyss of sins, where a demon has materialized into a shape with activated operations of evil conspiracies, like Carlo. The author Dan borrows *Angels and Demons* to praise angels and criticize demons. More importantly, he portrays the nature of humanity: to abandon malignancy. When humans' shared homeland full of overpopulation is being increasingly damaged, the living environment is no less severe than the difficulties in the earliest migration period of human beings. In the beginning, the earthly paradise is lost due to the eating of the fruit, but now what humans are facing is not only the loss of paradise, but also the risk of losing everything.

To be an angel or a demon, it's time to make a choice from a standpoint of a social status. However, just like the

two-faced god, each image cannot be extinguished clearly away one from the other, but gets intertwined and involved with each other. Therefore, the worldly individuals are allowed to possess both the righteous side and the demonlike side in the reality. What matters is to hold up onto the final determination and to develop the angellike mindset.

## Note

All the contents mentioned in the novel are from the version of Dan Brown's *Angels and Demons* published by Corgi in 2009 [38].

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