

Comparison of cosmic dualism, ying- yang, zoroastrianism, and gnosticism



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Abstract

This essay will compare and contrast cosmic dualism, Chinese Yin-Yang, Zoroastrianism and Gnosticism. Each dualism is a thought, belief, way of life, or movement. Gods, beauty, good, evil, peace, and love live within each dualist movement or belief. To have one idea, belief, or to have them agree is not possible with these dualisms. These religions share a history of how they became, how they interacted, how they worshiped, and how they sought for difference in religion. These religious dualistic movements will have many similarities and many differences. Yin-Yang Cosmic Dualism

Cosmic dualism is when the world can co-exist as two equal parts. Cosmic dualism in some Chinese texts perceive the world as balanced between where no one is hostile to one another. Some forms of cosmic dualism are not as peaceful. But they all do relate in one way or another. Each dualistic movement believes in good and evil, light, and dark. In the end of most of the evil behaviors or worldly evils, the good and light took away the evil and dark.

This essay will provide an overview on Zoroastrianism the two co-equal powers that are locked in an eternal conflict (Livingston, 163). Zoroastrianism is another form of dualism. It is a form of radical dualism of conflict. The founder Zoroaster was corrupted and considered a profit.

This essay will provide information on Gnosticism. Gnosticism (Greek, gnosis, meaning of secret knowledge (Livingston, 167). Gnosticism is a more radical <https://assignbuster.com/comparison-of-cosmic-dualism-ying-yang-zoroastrianism-and-gnosticism/>

form of dualism. Gnosticism was a religious movement that believed Demiurge was the creator of the world. Demiurge was inferior to the Supreme being (Livingston, 167).

Lastly this essay will provide information through research on yin-yang dualism. Yin-yang in China is ancient and reflects the benign expectance of two primordial sacred cosmic forces or principles (Livingston, 164). Philosophy history provides a detailed break down of yin-yang

dualism. These topics on yin-yang, female, male, unity, peace, harmony will all

be discussed under the appropriate heading.

There are differences in Chinese yin-yang cosmic dualism. Comparing and contrasting these differences will not be easy, but understanding history provided from cosmic dualism and other forms of dualism such as Zoroastrianism, Gnosticism, and dualism all relate to our current world views.

Cosmic Dualism

Cosmic dualism is a view that does not have exact correlated pieces. Dualism is like a puzzle missing most or all the pieces. Not one dualistic view is correct and not one universal view is correct. When philosophers thought about the future, they thought about how it was created and asked questions about our very existence. Through myth, theory, and science philosophies were made, and two substances and principles were

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formed of good and evil, light, and dark (Freedman, 358). Cosmic dualism was the separation of humanity and the universe.

Cosmic dualism in some ways has the same religious messages that good always comes out on top, while evil will always fail. Cosmic dualism also has belief in figures such as angels, and a devil. Some examples of these people are Michael and Belial, the prince of light and the prince of darkness (Qumran Studies, 283).

In Qumran Studies article discussed different types of dualistic thought. These types of dualism relate somewhat to cosmic dualism. Some examples discussed were spatial thought. Spatial thought is the thought that two worlds are divided. Spatial thought is the thought of above, below, heaven and earth (Qumran Studies, 283). The second example was eschatological dualism, this type of thought is a division of present and future and heaven and hell.

All though cosmic dualism and dualistic thoughts are interesting, comparing Zoroastrianism next will show large differences on dualism and the thought of dualism. The examples provided above are just the tip of the iceberg.

Zoroastrianism A faith in action.

Zoroastrianism is still to this very day practiced. Zoroastrianism asks the same question as most other religions. Why are we here? Where did we come from? And like most religions Zoroastrians are a faith in action with worship, prayer, rituals, social celebrations, and acts
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of philanthropy. Zoroastrians focus a lot on community unity (Rose, Ch. 1). One question that

is asked as well is, how did Zoroastrianism become a religion? Zoroastrianism started in Persian Iran. Zoroastrianism was radical for its time. Zoroastrianism had a prophet named Zarathustra.

Zarathustra believed that the God Ahura Mazda had a mission to form a new form of Zoroastrianism. During Zoroastrianism, it was believed that Ahura Mazda was a supreme God, Wise Lord of Light. This mission of Zarathustra's did not sit well with other movements.

Zarathustra's change ran more along the side of monotheism and focused worship on Ahura Mazda (Livingstone, 165).

Zarathustra struggled with the thought of the dualistic forces.

Zarathustra's mission had now made a god and a devil. Ahura Mazda's in Zoroastrianism was what is considered Jesus in the Bible. Ahura Mazda was the holy spirit and to be worshiped at the highest. Unlike the Angra Mainyu which was the devil and demonic. The conflict between cosmic dualism and dual forces changed from good and evil, to right and wrong. Gathas were hymns gathered by Zarathustra, these hymns gave information when the moral division occurred. Livingstone stated that this is when "Ahura Mazda created the world and gave his creatures, including the two spirits, freedom of choice" (Livingstone, 165).

Overall, the change of Zoroastrianism happened when prophet Zarathustra decided that a change was needed between cosmic dualism and the dual forces. This created a God and Devil. It

also created a freedom of choice. And when freedom of choice was given this made the dual forces change to right and wrong. Now on to another form of radical dualism, Gnosticism.

Gnosticism the meaning of knowledge.

Gnosticism was a religious philosophical movement. This movement was a mix and match of paganism, Judaism, and Christianity. Gnostics believe Demiurge was another ultimate God with powers (Livingston, 167). Gnosticism also can relate to the Bible. The Bible tells a story of how a devil was an angel. This angel was kicked out of heaven and sent to hell. Gnosticism thought that one's very soul fell from heaven and became entrapped in a mortal body as punishment. Gnosticism was considered radically different from the Bible. One difference between the Bible and Gnosticism is souls had a second chance to return to heaven, if they had gathered enough knowledge. The more knowledge one had the better chance they had to get to heaven. Gnosticism did not teach the creation of the world the same as the Bible.

There were differences in what was thought at the Church of Rome compared to what Gnosticism taught. These differences were frowned upon at the Church of Rome (Livingston, 167). This group had taken bits and pieces out of the Old Testament. Gnostics did not believe that the world was created by one God, but it was ruled by powers, and one of these powers included a Yahweh out of the Old Testament (Livingston, 167). Gnosticism movement was not only frowned upon but also was a threat to other religious groups and movements. Some

religions like Judaism and Islam, Christianity felt their views on creation, goodness, and Gods would be lost during the movements of Gnosticism (Livingston, 167).

Overall Gnosticism caused an uproar with other dualistic movements. Gnosticism just like Zoroastrianism were fighting for differences in views. But were either one of them correct? They both caused other religious groups to feel a sense of loss and defeat. These groups worried that their views on God's creation, goodness, right, wrong, heaven, and hell would be lost. Unlike these religions and movements that developed a bad view towards one another, there was one that did not have these same thoughts but felt the interconnectedness with the world in which they lived, this is yin-yang.

Yin-Yang the thinkers.

Livingston defines "Yin yang dualism of China is ancient and reflects a benign, complementary depiction of two primordial sacred cosmic forces or principles" (Livingston, 164). It is believed that yin-yang teach in a more eccentric (Livingston, 164).

When separating yin and yang it is found that both represent differences in human beings such as female and male, good and bad, nature and harmony, peace and love, heaven and earth. Yin is female, feminine, positive, active, light. Yang is male, masculine, light, dry, hard. Together they opposites and opposites do attract whether it is good or bad, one will affect the other in a positive or negative way (Livingston, 164). Yin-Yang are considered a net.

Like the list above, good, bad, heaven, earth, male, female, nature, peace, <https://assignbuster.com/comparison-of-cosmic-dualism-ying-yang-zoroastrianism-and-gnosticism/>

love and harmony are all interconnected. When one acts they all reacts. This could apply to the sane for every action there is a reaction, which is true if following yin and yang. It is thought that Yin-Yang was possibly developed during the time of the Three Kingdoms. A myth was formed during this time. The myth is about a cosmic egg was formed and in this cosmic egg was a hero Pangu. Pangu slept in the cosmic egg for 800, 000 years and when he finally awoke he was in darkness. Pangu eventually came out of this egg to see the light. As Pangu grew it expanded the heaven and earth. When Pangu could not grow anymore he died. When he died his body parts became multiple things that formed the earth. His breath became wind and clouds, his voice became thunder, his left eye was the sun and his right eye was the moon. His limbs became what is the four directions and mountains. His blood was rivers and oceans. And his bones became stones, his hair was the stars and skin was the grass and plants (Wang, 42, 43).

There is not any evidence why this myth was formed or even if it relatable to Yin-Yang, although it is easy to assume that a possible God was formed from this myth, and a philosophy. There is also relatable that this myth somehow did influence Yin-Yang and the views on how humans and universe are in one way or another interconnect.

Overall yin-yang was more of a thought on how the world connected with one another. Yin-Yang is a thought of how one should live within the harmony with the earth, how everything is interconnected. Not only does

Zoroastrianism, Gnosticism and yin-yang all have quite different dualistic thoughts and movements, but they all relate to a God, a will, belief, and world view on existence.

Conclusion.

This essay has reflected on Zoroastrianism, Gnosticism, and yin-yang. When comparing and contrasting the three it is easy to see that they all relate in radical ways. Zoroastrianism wanted free choice and challenged the dualistic forces. Ultimately, they believed that one would go to heaven or hell even though it was not called that. Gnosticism wanted knowledge and with knowledge one's soul would be set free. Gnosticism challenged what other religions thought and taught. This caused worry and paranoia that God's, creation, and goodness would be lost. And like Zoroastrianism, the Gnostics had a heaven and hell, but differed in creations. Yin-yang is more mythical and magical in its teachings, they believe everything is connected, and should live in harmony with all around. Yin-yang dualism may have formed a God without knowing it, (Pangu). And from Pangu myth they formed the belief in interconnectedness. After comparing and contrasting these dualistic movements it is not hard to see how religions have developed over time. It is also easy to see how these movements affected society then and now. These movements change societies then and religious movements have changed society today. These movements were radical, scary, and were challenged. The search for the true God and the right belief will always be up for debate.

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