AN INTERPRETATION OF VARIOUS ASPECTS OF DUALISM
AS FOUND IN THE ART OF AFRICA AND CHINA

THESIS

Presented to the Graduate Council of the
North Texas State University in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

By

Jini Yet Har Lee, B. S.
Denton, Texas
January, 1970
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The principle of dualism is deeply rooted in philosophy, religion, superstition and art. Man, primitive and civilized, has posited the existence of contrasting, yet complementary forces. At times the concept involves two independent and mutually irreducible principles, at other times, the completeness or union between polarities.

The phenomenon of the double image frequently occurs in the artistic expressions of many cultures. (See examples in the appendix.) Because of the symbolic function of much historic art, it might easily be supposed that the dual image is the concrete expression of a less material philosophical or religious concept of dualism. Such a supposition invites interpretation of such art in terms of cultural beliefs.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to endeavor to interpret these various aspects of dualism through an analysis of selected examples of art from two cultural areas, Africa and China.

Research indicates that no other general studies in this field have been made.
Limitation of the Study

While dualistic art appears in many parts of the world, this study has been limited to dualism as it appears in the art of Africa and China, where examples are found in great abundance. These two areas of diverse cultures provide prime examples of the two expressions of dualism considered in this study. Although not central to this study, examples of dualism from other cultures are included in the appendix for purposes of visual comparison.

Sources of Data

The illustrations included in this study are contour line drawings based on illustrations appearing in fifty books on the sculpture and art of these people.

Information obtained from texts on art, encyclopaedias, and dictionaries is augmented by an oriental background of formal study of the Chinese beliefs and superstitions which contributed much of the duality found in Chinese art.

Method of Procedure

This study is organized as follows. The introductory chapter states the problem, the purpose of the study, limitation of the study made, and the sources of data.

Chapter II includes information as to the background and culture of the people whose art is studied. From these
findings and from a study of representative pieces of art, an interpretation is made of the duality principle and how it is variously manifested.

Chapter III summarizes the study and recommends related areas for future studies.
CHAPTER II

THE INTERPRETATION AND SIGNIFICANCE
OF THE DUALITY FOUND IN ART

Duality in African Art

Mani, "the apostle of God," is the founder of the religion called Manichaeism, which is one of the most influential religions of the ancient world. He was born in Southern Babylonia about 216 A.D. Mani is said to have received his first revelation at the age of twelve, but did not receive his formal call to apostleship until he was 24. \(^1\)

The Manichaean religion arose in Babylonia about the middle of the third century. \(^2\) After the death of Mani, it spread through Syria into the West and spread eastward deep into Central Asia and finally into most parts of the world. \(^3\)

The chief characteristic of Mani's system is a consistent dualism which rejects any possibility of tracing the origins of good and evil to one and the same source. Evil stands as a completely independent principle against good, and redemption from the power of evil is to be achieved by recognizing

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\(^1\) Paul Edwards, The Encyclopaedia of Philosophy (New York) p. 149.


\(^3\) Edwards, op. cit., p. 150.
this dualism and following the appropriate rules of life. The opposition of God and matter is seen in the realm of nature as the conflict of light and darkness, truth and error. The present world, and man in particular, presents a mixture of good and evil, the result of a breach of the original limits by the powers of evil. The whole purpose of the founding of the universe was to separate the two principles and to restore the original state of affairs, rendering evil forever harmless and preventing any future repetition of the intermingling.

The Manichaens believed that they must conduct themselves accordingly, in such a way as to avoid any further contamination of the light and promote its release from its mixture with the darkness. To them, the death of the body is redemption; and true life is the release of the soul, which is light, from its imprisonment in the body upon its return to its future abode.4

The philosophy of the Manichaens spread to many nations of the world, influencing their culture and their art works. Through merchants, traders, and sailors, the natives of Africa came into contact with the belief of Manichaism which stresses the good and evil of man and the conflict of light and dark. This contact had great influence on the African outlook on life and in African art works.

4Ibid., p. 50.
Through Manichaeism the Africans realize that there is a double nature in every human being, and they express their belief in the duality through their creations of masks and sculpture. These are usually carved from freshly cut wood which, on drying, tends to split and hasten the process of decay. That is why not many comparatively old wooden masks and sculptures exist in collections in this day and time.5 Most African dual sculpture and masks are almost always made of a single unit of material, but there are some notable exceptions made of more than one piece.

Naturally not all pieces of art showing duality are based on the same composition. There are characteristic differences in the use of the motifs and also a variety of means of exaggeration and simplification. There are multiple art styles and art forms used, and each tribe develops different styles of its own. But each piece does contribute to the basic central idea of duality.

Figure 1 shows a piece of wooden sculpture with two identical heads joined together from the top of the head to the neck. This piece of art represents the dual nature of man. The two natures are totally different one from another, but both of them are bound together within the same man. This duality of natures, which is described as good and evil, controls the thought, behavior, and modes of action of that

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person. The joining of the two heads shows that the two faces share the same mind, which controls the entire thinking personality of the man. In other words, that man may act, think, imitate a totally different personality from time to time, while functioning from the same body. Like Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, when the good nature takes control of his mind, he

Fig. 1—Double figurine, Bakuba, Africa. J. Maes, Art Negre (Paris, 1930), p. 33.

There is no significant difference between the good and bad nature in these two faces. The sculptor made the good and the evil natures similar so that no one can detect the good from the bad.
will act with compassion; but if the evil nature asserts itself, he will destroy and kill. These two forces are in direct opposition, like those found in a person who is suffering from schizophrenia. Figures 2, 3, and 4 have the same dual quality as Figure 1.

These double-headed figures can also be said to represent the omniscience of the deity looking both ways, into the past and into the future. To the Africans, the past is regarded as the darkness but the future is considered as light.


One would notice the similarity in these two heads joined together. There is no distinct difference between the evil and the good natures of man.
This is because they regard the past as something that they do not wish to go through again, nor do they like to remember. To them the past is something hopeless and lost, and nothing can redeem it. To the future, they look with great

![Fig. 3—Janiform dance headdress, Africa. Eliot Elisofane, Sculpture of Africa (New York, 1958), p. 191.](image)

On this carving, the evil nature on the left has a heavier head gear; the teeth look like fangs and the face looks harsh.
hope and ambition. They wish for and desire prosperity and peace for the years to come, and they consider the future as something to long and hope for.


The sculptor of this piece of art put a mask on the evil face (the one on the right). Even today the mask is worn to cover part of the face to disguise identity when one is committing an evil act.
In Figures 5 and 6, the two horns protruding from the top of the heads signify that the sculpture has the strength and protection of the animal.

Fig. 5--A double face mask with horns, Exoi, Africa. *Het Maske*, Antwerp Musee Royal Des Beaux-Arts, figure 169.

These two faces are rather similar. One cannot tell the good from the bad; that is the way man is.
The horns show that the good nature might be just as gentle and tame as the house cat, and the evil nature might be as cunning and vicious as a wolf.

Fig. 6—Janiform dance mask, Ibo, Africa. Eliot Elisofon, *The Sculpture of Africa* (New York, 1958), p. 142.

The evil nature on the left side has the tip of his horn broken. This happened in some encounters he has had with the good. One can see and compare the viciousness in the evil side with the peaceful appearance of the good side.
The Africans also express their belief of duality in the dual sculptures of a man and a woman joined together from the top of the head to the bottom of the toe as seen in Figures 7, 8, 9, and 10.

These figures have quite a different significance and interpretation of duality from those that are previously described. They represent the marriage unity of a male and female. This couple is united for better or for worse. To the African natives, there is no such thing as divorce, because, according to their customs, once a couple is married, they are married for life, and even after death. The joining of the backs signifies that nothing on earth can separate them and that from then on they will toil together. The joining of

![Fig. 8--Stone statuette of two people back to back, Guinea, Africa. Pauline Denise, African Sculpture (London, 1956), p. 70.](image)

This sculpture has two interpretations: a man and a woman united and the feminine and masculine characteristics of a male.
the legs shows that the wife has to follow her husband for the rest of her life. She will follow his footsteps, and wherever he goes, she goes.

Fig. 9--Wooden Janus figure, Kuyu, Africa. Margaret Plass, *African Tribal Sculpture*, (Pennsylvania, 1956), p. 4.

The top part of the bodies are tattooed to indicate the tribes to which they belong. The hands are raised in reverence. The costumes are ritual in nature.
The joining of the heads means that the wife has to obey her husband. He will give the orders and she has to obey. The joining also shows that the wife belongs to her

Fig. 10—Wooden Janus figure, Congo, Africa. Warren M. Robbins, African Art (London, 1966), p. 188.
husband both physically and mentally. After the unity, the wife will have no mental power of her own because her

Fig. 11—Janiform dance mask, Nigeria, Africa. Eliot Elisofone, *Sculpture of Africa* (New York, 1958), figure 190.
Husband will control whatever she does. In other words, the man will be the dominant power in the family or household.

In primitive Africa, the man ranked higher than the woman.

Most African natives believe in life after death. This type of sculpture gives the idea that a married couple hopes to be together again after they die. It is a sort of a promise to love and to care for each other both on earth and in the hereafter. This is an ideal type of sculpture to be given to a married couple by their parents to remind them that they belong to each other forever.

The duality of these sculptures also may be interpreted to represent the homosexuality of man. In Figure 7 the image on the right represents a man having all the physical characteristics of a male. He may think and act like any other normal man, but in his sexual life he prefers to be with another male instead of a female. During such a union, he may take the role of a female. Mentally he becomes a woman and unconsciously he pretends that he has all the physical qualities of a female. The left figure represents the male in a female state of mind.
Combined and related twin-shape masks are very popular with the Africans. Figures 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, and 18 show twin oblongs, forming two similar faces of dual masks.

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Fig. 12—Double face mask, Central Region, Africa. R. Goldwater, Senufo Sculpture from West Africa (New York, 1964), figure 27.

The two mask stands make it possible for the dancers to leave the mask in an upright position by pressing the stands into the ground when not in use. In this way, the carvings of the masks will be protected.

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These masks are constructed of wood, about four feet taller than a man. The height of the masks gives a sense of superior power and importance to the persons they represent.

Fig. 13—Double face mask, Central Region, Africa. R. Goldwater, *Senufo Sculpture of West Africa* (New York, 1964), Figure 28.

They are very heavy, and it usually takes two persons to move one.7

7Ibid.
These types of masks again represent the dual nature of a man. But in this case, the masks represent yet another duality—the mature nature and the immature nature. One face represents the immature nature of early life and the

Fig. 14—Double face mask, Korhogo, Africa. R. Goldwater, *Senufo Sculpture from West Africa* (New York, 1964), figure 26.

other represents the matured nature found in adult life. The joining of the two masks along the side shows that a person's nature will grow from immaturity to maturity, but his physical features will remain basically the same all through his life. This is represented by the two identical faces of the mask.
Even in his mature life, he may at times regress to his earlier immature nature because he wants to rationalize his "bad" acts as he did when he was a child. Therefore, it can be said that the two mature and immature natures of a person interact with one another throughout that person's entire life.

Fig. 15—Headdress mask in human form, Boki, Africa. William Fagg, *Tribes and Forms in African Art* (New York, 1965), p. 58.
The dancers who use this type of mask may dance two separate dances to represent the significance of duality of the masks. Once they have the masks on, the wearers no longer have their own identities; they will represent the personalities of the mask instead.

In the mask illustrated in Figure 16, the mask-maker carved a beard on the left face of the dual mask to show the nature of that person.

Fig. 16—Headdress mask, Keaka, Africa. William Fagg, Tribes and Forms in African Art (New York, 1965), p. 59.
Fig. 17—The dance mask, Senufo Africa. Eliot Eliofson, *Sculpture of Africa* (New York, 1956), figure 111.

The horns reappear in this mask.
Fig. 18—Double mask, Baule, Ivory Coast, Africa. Olive L. Riley, *Masks and Magic* (New York, 1955), figure 37.

This mask shows bulk, thereby requiring two people to move it.
In Africa, crocodiles are much feared by the natives. These animals live together in big groups in order to provide protection for each other, and the natives admire them for their unity. Figure 19 shows one of the very rare duality pieces from the Ivory Coast. It consists of two crocodiles joined together with a single back. This sculpture signifies the symbol of unity in a family. The Africans consider each individual family as a separate

Fig. 19--Two crocodiles, Ivory Coast, Africa. Denise Pauline, African Sculpture (London, 1955), figure 10.

family, and the whole tribe as a big family. The two separate heads represent all the small families found in a tribe.
Each family sees and thinks differently, is entitled to its own opinions and is allowed to cope with its own domestic problems; yet, the chief and his council make the decisions for the whole tribe, and these decisions must be obeyed by every family unit. This is the symbolism of the joined backs of the two crocodiles.

The African tribesmen know that their tribe will be strong and powerful in unity as a family. They will be able to defend themselves against attacks of their enemies if they fight together as a tribe. They know that it will be a salvation to them, and they consider it to be right; but if they separated into individual families, their strength will be limited, and they may not be able to survive. This means each family will face extermination from the face of the earth, and this is considered darkness, for which there is no hope.

Duality in Chinese Art

In the period between 206 B.C. and 204 A.D., China emerged as a unified empire. Stimulated by unity and relative peace, profound philosophies and religious concepts made their appearance in the arts.

These were particularly expressed in diagrams of the universe in microcosm, which have been constantly repeated in Asiatic art, with but slight variations until modern times. The most abstract of those diagrams was a circle.
bisected by a wavy line, one half being red, the other black.\textsuperscript{8} This diagram is called the Yin-Yang and is shown in Figure 20. It is represented by a circle within which are two reversed half circles, each of half the diameter of the inclosing circle. The geometric construction produces the effect of two yolks within a single egg, a highly significant pictograph.\textsuperscript{9}

![Yin-Yang diagram]

Fig. 20—The Yin-Yang which stand for the Universal symbol of life, China. Herbert P. Whitlock and Martin L. Ehrmann, The Story of Jade (New York, 1949) p. 45.

There is nothing written about its origin or early representations, but its ideas are simple and clear. Basically, it is conceived of as two cosmic forces which give

\textsuperscript{8}Dagobert D. Runes and Harry G. Schrickel, editors, Encyclopedia of the Arts (New York, 1946) p. 980.

\textsuperscript{9}Herbert P. Whitlock and Martin L. Ehrmann, The Story of Jade (New York, 1949) p. 45.
rise to the origin of existence. Yin is negative, passive, and disintegrative; the other, Yang, is positive, active, strong, and integrative.\(^\text{10}\)

The conception of Yin-Yang can also be interpreted as a presystematic dualism. The passive and disintegrative Yin represents the dark feminine and negative principle and the active and strong Yang represents the masculine, bright, generative principle. Yin forms the earth and Yang the heaven.\(^\text{11}\) These principles represent the opposition in balance of the positive and negative forces of the universe, male-female and heaven-earth. The principles also portray sexual union, representing the highest balance of which mankind is capable, opposition in unity.\(^\text{12}\)

These ideas of the Yin-Yang have affected every aspect of Chinese life, especially the art work and marriage, and its metaphysics.

According to Chinese belief, anything associated with Yang is believed to have great power as a counteracting force and demon repellent. For this reason, anything colored red (the Yang color) is considered as "lucky" for weddings, the Chinese New Year, and other festivities. That is why money is wrapped in red packets for the Chinese New Year.

\(^\text{10}\)Edwards, op. cit., p. 89.


\(^\text{12}\)Maria Leach, Dictionary of Folklore, Mythology, and Legend (New York, 1949), p. 221.
Red is considered as a good luck sign with the hope that it will bring wealth and happiness in years to come.

Yin is associated with colorless things of black or white. These are to be avoided because the Chinese consider them the colors for the dead, or at least, unlucky.

The evil forces of Yin were collectively expressed in art under the form of five loathsome creatures, usually spiders, lizards, centipedes, snakes, and toads. Together they are known as the "Five Poisons." Paradoxically, it is believed that if figures of these animals are displayed, they can ward off the Yin influence which they represent.13

Figure 21 shows a pair of fish joined together along the side. These carp are familiar designs throughout the

Fig. 21--Two fish joined bodily together, China. William Willetts, Foundations of Chinese Art (New York, 1965) p. 156.

13 Runes and Schrickel, op. cit., p. 83.
countryside and for this reason they are used as subjects for portrayal by nature-loving designers.

This piece of art denotes the symbols of domestic happiness and in particular of conjugal fidelity. The paired carp symbolizes sexual union between a couple. It is also regarded as symbolic of literary attainment because the carp is said to struggle against the force of river current and through perseverance to master it.\textsuperscript{14}

The tremendous reproductive powers of this fish help to associate it in popular imagination with abundant human progeny. The prodigality of its spawn also symbolizes a standard for human prosperity, a symbolism enhanced by the fact that the characters for "fish" and "super abundance" are pronounced as homophones.\textsuperscript{15}

The two fishes signify that a married couple should remain faithful and love each other for life, and that they will pine away and die if forcibly separated.

This piece of sculpture is usually presented as a wedding gift to a young couple in the hope that they will have a successful marriage with as many children as they wish. The Chinese people believe that if a married couple cannot have any children, that couple is being punished by the gods for something they or their ancestors might have done in the past. It is considered a great disgrace for both

\textsuperscript{14}Ibid., p. 146.

\textsuperscript{15}Ibid., pp. 156-157.
the girl and her family if she is barren. To the Chinese, children are a form of wealth and to them life will not be complete without them. That is why an average Chinese family will have about five children.

Figure 22 shows a pair of stylized fish having the same basic duality principles as Figure 21.

Fig. 22--Two fish in primitive pattern, China. Herbert P. Whitlock and Martin L. Ehrmanny, The Story of Jade (New York, 1949), p. 98.
In this figure, the two fish are joined together by the mouth and by the tail with a circle between them. The circle represents the water in the oceans, lakes, and ponds in which the fish flourish. The two fish clinging so tightly to the circle show how much their lives depend on the water, without which they would surely perish. In the same way as with the fish, human lives are also dependent on water for survival.

The two joined fish represent the lives of a married couple who will then swim through the rest of their lives together.

Fig. 23—Twin birds, China. Daisy Lion Goldschmidt and Jean Claude Moreau Sobard, China Art (New York, 1966), p. 120.
As with the fish, the joining of the two birds in Figure 23 also signifies domestic happiness and conjugal fidelity.

The cups which are used to pledge the union of a Chinese bride and bridegroom are duple, consisting of two tube-like wine containers as shown in Figure 24.

Fig. 24—A cup of twin tubes (Bridal Cup), Ming Period, China. Herbert P. Whitlock and Martin L. Ehrmann, The Story of Jade (New York, 1949), p. 182.
During the wedding ceremony, this special twin cup is filled with wine. The bride will drink from one of the tubes while the bridegroom will drink from the other. This ceremony pledges the union of the couple. To the older Chinese people, this is just like saying "I do" in a modern marriage ceremony.

After the bride and the bridegroom have drunk from the tubes of the cup, they are legally married and from then on they belong to each other. The joining of the two tubes signifies the union of the couple. The wife will have to love, cherish, and obey her husband and the husband in turn must provide love and protection for her. They are bound forever and nothing on earth will be able to separate them legally, for divorce is unheard of in China. This ceremony first appeared during the Ming dynasty.16

16Ibid., p. 178.
The double snuff bottle, illustrated in Figure 25, like the bridal cup shown in Figure 24, signifies the union of a male and a female.

Fig. 25--A double snuff bottle, Ching Period, China. Sheridon W. House, *The Story of Jade* (New York), p. 45.

Figure 26, showing a twin set of vases, also has the same significance and principle of duality illustrated in Figures 24 and 25.
Fig. 26—Pair of Lung Ch’uan vases, Sung Dynasty, China. Albert Willem Rudolf Theil, *Chinese Pottery and Stone Ware* (Los Angeles, 1953), p. 148.

While the shapes are different, the twin tubes, the double snuff bottle, the twin vases and the double vase with cover (See Figure 27) have a common meaning—the union of a couple in marriage.
Fig. 27—Double vase with cover, Ching Dynasty, China. Fujio Koyama and John Figgess, Two Thousand Years of Oriental Ceramics (New York, 1961, p. 173.)
In ancient China, most of the population worked as farmers growing rice, which is the staple food.

The Chinese people are very superstitious, and every year before they start rice planting, they pray to the mother earth for plenty of rain for that year.

Figure 28 shows a double-headed hydra carved in white nephrite mottled with light brown. This piece of art is offered by the worshippers to the Altar of Mother Earth as a prayer for rain.17

One hydra represents the mother earth and the other represents the worshippers. The joining of the bodies of

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17 Ibid.
the hydras signifies that the Chinese farmers have made a covenant with the mother earth for rain. The pyramid-like piece with many marble-like knots that joins the two hydras together represents the seal of the covenant. It shows that a covenant is established forever and that no power can break it.

The pig-like heads of the hydra represent all the four-footed animals that tread on earth; the two fish tails represent all the living creatures found in the rivers, lakes, streams, and ponds; and the feather-like marks on the bodies of the hydras represent all the creatures that live in the air. The worshippers ask for mercy, not only for themselves, but also for all creatures on earth. Without water, everything on earth would perish.

A rare piece in the form of a full cup composed of two mandarin ducks joined together, the heads and curving necks forming the handles, is seen in Figure 29.18

To the Chinese, mandarin ducks are considered objects of good omen. These birds are always a welcome sight to the people, for they believe that mandarin ducks will bring them wealth and prosperity in the years to come.

The cup between the two ducks represents the wealth, good luck, and happiness in store for the person who drinks from the cup.

18Willets, op. cit., p. 156.
As is believed by people from other countries (e.g., the saying, "Two heads are better than one."), the Chinese believe two, or doubling, adds power. Consequently, the joining of the two ducks signifies the united power the ducks confer on the wishes of the person who drinks from the cup.

Fig. 29—A wishing cup, China. Daisy Lion Goldschmidt and Jean Claude Moreau Gobar, *Chinese Art* (New York, 1966), p. 186.

This unusual cup is used only during important events of the year, such as the Chinese New Year and birthdays. On either of these days, the head of the family will solemnly drink wine from the cup in the hope that he and his family will have a happy and prosperous year.
The pieces of sculpture illustrated in Figures 30, 31, and 32 signify the unity of a family. The Chinese people of ancient times and even of today have very strong family ties among the members within a family. They believe that in unity they can stand up to any hardship that might come their way. That is why the importance of family unity is being indoctrinated into the teaching of young children at a very early age by their parents.

Fig. 30—Bronze Animal, Shang Dynasty, China. Dagny Carter, 4000 Years of China’s Art (New York, 1948), p. 20.

The two bronze animals, heading in opposite directions, represent the individual children of the family. When they grow up they will go their separate ways, and each will move out from the family home. But even if they live away
from home, their hearts are always still together. They will be still as a united family in their hearts. This is signified by the joining of the two animals.

Fig. 31—Double-Headed Animal, Han Dynasty, China. L. R. Hobsom, The Romance of Chinese Art (New York, 1929), p. 175.

The unity of the family is so strong that nothing on earth can break it. If some injustice has been done to any member of the family, it will be remembered by the
entire household many generations to come. If the present
family is unable to seek revenge, the injustice will be
recalled by their sons and their sons' sons for years till
revenge is finally taken.

Fig. 32--Double-Headed Animal, China. Dagny Carter,
Summary and Conclusions

Because of the pervasiveness of symbolism in much of the art work of mankind, it is quite natural to assume that the frequent appearance of double imagery in the artistic works of various peoples may be symbolically equated to various philosophical and religious concepts of duality. While on occasion such interpretations at best may be suppositional, a study of African and Chinese life reveals rich cultural bases which support interpretations of dualism as they are manifested in the concrete form of art. From an examination of cultural data and the visual evidence manifested in various examples of art, this study postulates a number of interpretations of selected double images as being symbolic expressions of folklore.

In Africa, the duality of good and evil is represented by the joining together of two sculptured heads back to back. This interpretation parallels a similar dualism found in the religion of Manichaeism which places strong emphasis on the dual nature of man, equating good with light and dark with evil.

Because of variations found in the sculptural treatment of the dual images of Africa, other aspects of polarity are
attributed to certain examples. Figures representing the union, back to back, of man and woman are interpreted as symbolizing the homosexual nature of man. Double-faced masks, with the faces joined along one side, are postulated to be symbolic of the mature and immature natures of man. A sculpture of two crocodiles closely conjoined is interpreted as symbolizing the unity of family and tribe.

Among the Chinese, it is the preoccupation with union of the Yin-Yang, which stands for female and male, that gave rise to duality in the art work of these people. Unlike the duality of the Africans, most of Chinese duality stresses the concept of family harmony, conjugal felicity, and the union between the female and the male. The covenant made between human beings and the mother earth is discussed. This is represented by the two joined hydra.

Recommendations

It is hoped that this investigation will stimulate other students to further study the significance and interpretation of duality in art.

Profitable studies might be made of the various reasons behind this creation of duality in art in areas other than Africa and China. A correlation of these studies could provide new insights in the long continuity of art and its influence on modern man.
APPENDIX

The following pages illustrate additional examples of duality as depicted in the art forms of countries other than Africa and China. The artists have represented duality in a variety of human, animal, and object forms. An indication of the wide geographic and cultural distribution of dualistic art is indicated by the countries of origin. These are Belgium, Austria, Denmark, Holland, Italy, Portugal, Russia, Oceania, South America, and Mexico.
Fig. 33—Handle of a wooden spoon, Huon Gulf, Northeast New Guinea. Tibor Bodrogi, *Oceanic Art* (Hungary, 1959), p. 49.
Fig. 34—Skull, New Guinea. Maurice Leenhardt, *Folk Art of Oceania* (France, 1950), p. 23.
Fig. 35—Fisherman's god of shell, Hawaii, Peter H. Buck, *Arts and Crafts of Hawaii* (Hawaii, 1957), p. 503.
Fig. 36—Bronze Age figures, Bangkinang, South Sumatra. Bernet A. Kempers, Ancient Indonesian Art (Massachusetts, 1959), plate 8.
Fig. 38--Bronze Age figurine, Copenhagen, Denmark. *Encyclopedia of World Art* (London, 1961), plate 178.
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Fig. 41—A goat and a cow, Nuragica, Italy. Giovanni Lilliu, Sculpture Della Sardegna Nuragica (Gagiliari, 1956), figure 116.
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Fig. 43—Janus head, Portugal. William F. Buller, *Afro-Portuguese Ivories* (London), p. 24.
Fig. 44--The Janus head, Portugal. William F. Buller, *Afro-Portuguese Ivories* (London), p. 28.
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Fig. 46—Vases, Peru, South America. Raoul D'Harcourt, *Arts de l'Amerique* (Paris, 1948), p. 129.
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Fig. 50—Double-headed puma, Colombia, South America. Wendell C. Bennett, Ancient Arts of the Andes (New York, 1954), p. 155.
Fig. 51—Two modeled animal heads, Brazil, South America. Wendell C. Bennett, *Ancient Arts of the Andes* (New York, 1954), p. 175.
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Publications of Learned Organizations

AN INTERPRETATION OF VARIOUS ASPECTS OF DUALISM

AS FOUND IN THE ART OF AFRICA AND CHINA

APPROVED:

[Signatures]

Major Professor

Minor Professor

Director of the Department of Art

Dean of the Graduate School
AN INTERPRETATION OF VARIOUS ASPECTS OF DUALISM
AS FOUND IN THE ART OF AFRICA AND CHINA

THESIS

Presented to the Graduate Council of the
North Texas State University in Partial
Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree of

MASTER OF ARTS

By

Jini Yet Har Lee, B. S.
Denton, Texas
January, 1970
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The principle of dualism is deeply rooted in philosophy, religion, superstition and art. Man, primitive and civilized, has posited the existence of contrasting, yet complementary forces. At times the concept involves two independent and mutually irreducible principles, at other times, the completeness or union between polarities.

The phenomenon of the double image frequently occurs in the artistic expressions of many cultures. (See examples in the appendix.) Because of the symbolic function of much historic art, it might easily be supposed that the dual image is the concrete expression of a less material philosophical or religious concept of dualism. Such a supposition invites interpretation of such art in terms of cultural beliefs.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to endeavor to interpret these various aspects of dualism through an analysis of selected examples of art from two cultural areas, Africa and China.

Research indicates that no other general studies in this field have been made.
Limitation of the Study

While dualistic art appears in many parts of the world, this study has been limited to dualism as it appears in the art of Africa and China, where examples are found in great abundance. These two areas of diverse cultures provide prime examples of the two expressions of dualism considered in this study. Although not central to this study, examples of dualism from other cultures are included in the appendix for purposes of visual comparison.

Sources of Data

The illustrations included in this study are contour line drawings based on illustrations appearing in fifty books on the sculpture and art of these people.

Information obtained from texts on art, encyclopaedias, and dictionaries is augmented by an oriental background of formal study of the Chinese beliefs and superstitions which contributed much of the duality found in Chinese art.

Method of Procedure

This study is organized as follows. The introductory chapter states the problem, the purpose of the study, limitation of the study made, and the sources of data.

Chapter II includes information as to the background and culture of the people whose art is studied. From these
findings and from a study of representative pieces of art, an interpretation is made of the duality principle and how it is variously manifested.

Chapter III summarizes the study and recommends related areas for future studies.
CHAPTER II

THE INTERPRETATION AND SIGNIFICANCE
OF THE DUALITY FOUND IN ART

Duality in African Art

Mani, "the apostle of God," is the founder of the religion called Manichaeism, which is one of the most influential religions of the ancient world. He was born in Southern Babylonia about 216 A.D. Mani is said to have received his first revelation at the age of twelve, but did not receive his formal call to apostleship until he was 24.¹

The Manichaean religion arose in Babylonia about the middle of the third century.² After the death of Mani, it spread through Syria into the West and spread eastward deep into Central Asia and finally into most parts of the world.³

The chief characteristic of Mani's system is a consistent dualism which rejects any possibility of tracing the origins of good and evil to one and the same source. Evil stands as a completely independent principle against good, and redemption from the power of evil is to be achieved by recognizing

¹Paul Edwards, The Encyclopaedia of Philosophy (New York) p. 149.
³Edwards, op. cit., p. 150.
this dualism and following the appropriate rules of life. The opposition of God and matter is seen in the realm of nature as the conflict of light and darkness, truth and error. The present world, and man in particular, presents a mixture of good and evil, the result of a breach of the original limits by the powers of evil. The whole purpose of the founding of the universe was to separate the two principles and to restore the original state of affairs, rendering evil forever harmless and preventing any future repetition of the intermingling.

The Manichaeans believed that they must conduct themselves accordingly, in such a way as to avoid any further contamination of the light and promote its release from its mixture with the darkness. To them, the death of the body is redemption; and true life is the release of the soul, which is light, from its imprisonment in the body upon its return to its future abode.4

The philosophy of the Manichaens spread to many nations of the world, influencing their culture and their art works. Through merchants, traders, and sailors, the natives of Africa came into contact with the belief of Manichaeism which stresses the good and evil of man and the conflict of light and dark. This contact had great influence on the African outlook on life and in African art works.

4Ibid., p. 50.
Through Manichaeism the Africans realize that there is a double nature in every human being, and they express their belief in the duality through their creations of masks and sculpture. These are usually carved from freshly cut wood which, on drying, tends to split and hasten the process of decay. That is why not many comparatively old wooden masks and sculptures exist in collections in this day and time.5 Most African dual sculpture and masks are almost always made of a single unit of material, but there are some notable exceptions made of more than one piece.

Naturally not all pieces of art showing duality are based on the same composition. There are characteristic differences in the use of the motifs and also a variety of means of exaggeration and simplification. There are multiple art styles and art forms used, and each tribe develops different styles of its own. But each piece does contribute to the basic central idea of duality.

Figure 1 shows a piece of wooden sculpture with two identical heads joined together from the top of the head to the neck. This piece of art represents the dual nature of man. The two natures are totally different one from another, but both of them are bound together within the same man. This duality of natures, which is described as good and evil, controls the thought, behavior, and modes of action of that

person. The joining of the two heads shows that the two faces share the same mind, which controls the entire thinking personality of the man. In other words, that man may act, think, imitate a totally different personality from time to time, while functioning from the same body. Like Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, when the good nature takes control of his mind, he


There is no significant difference between the good and bad nature in these two faces. The sculptor made the good and the evil natures similar so that no one can detect the good from the bad.
will act with compassion; but if the evil nature asserts itself, he will destroy and kill. These two forces are in direct opposition, like those found in a person who is suffering from schizophrenia. Figures 2, 3, and 4 have the same dual quality as Figure 1.

These double-headed figures can also be said to represent the omniscience of the deity looking both ways, into the past and into the future. To the Africans, the past is regarded as the darkness but the future is considered as light.


One would notice the similarity in these two heads joined together. There is no distinct difference between the evil and the good natures of man.
This is because they regard the past as something that they do not wish to go through again, nor do they like to remember. To them the past is something hopeless and lost, and nothing can redeem it. To the future, they look with great

Fig. 3—Janiform dance headdress, Africa. Eliot Elisofone, *Sculpture of Africa* (New York, 1958), p. 191.

On this carving, the evil nature on the left has a heavier head gear; the teeth look like fangs and the face looks harsh.
hope and ambition. They wish for and desire prosperity and peace for the years to come, and they consider the future as something to long and hope for.


The sculptor of this piece of art put a mask on the evil face (the one on the right). Even today the mask is worn to cover part of the face to disguise identity when one is committing an evil act.
In Figures 5 and 6, the two horns protruding from the top of the heads signify that that sculpture has the strength and protection of the animal.

Fig. 5—A double face mask with horns, Ekoi, Africa. Het Maske, Antwerp Musee Royal Des Beaux-Arts, figure 169.

These two faces are rather similar. One cannot tell the good from the bad; that is the way man is.
The horns show that the good nature might be just as gentle and tame as the house cat, and the evil nature might be as cunning and vicious as a wolf.

Fig. 6—Janiform dance mask, Ibo, Africa. Eliot Elisofon, The Sculpture of Africa (New York, 1958), p. 142.

The evil nature on the left side has the tip of his horn broken. This happened in some encounters he has had with the good. One can see and compare the viciousness in the evil side with the peaceful appearance of the good side.
The Africans also express their belief of duality in the dual sculptures of a man and a woman joined together from the top of the head to the bottom of the toe as seen in Figures 7, 8, 9, and 10.

These figures have quite a different significance and interpretation of duality from those that are previously described. They represent the marriage unity of a male and female. This couple is united for better or for worse. To the African natives, there is no such thing as divorce, because, according to their customs, once a couple is married, they are married for life, and even after death. The joining of the backs signifies that nothing on earth can separate them and that from then on they will toil together. The joining of

![Fig. 8--Stone statuette of two people back to back, Guinea, Africa. Pauline Denise, African Sculpture (London, 1956), p. 70.](image)

This sculpture has two interpretations: a man and a woman united and the feminine and masculine characteristics of a male.
the legs shows that the wife has to follow her husband for
the rest of her life. She will follow his footsteps, and
wherever he goes, she goes.

![Wooden Janus figure, Kuyu, Africa](image)

Fig. 9--Wooden Janus figure, Kuyu, Africa. Margaret Plass, *African Tribal Sculpture*, (Pennsylvania, 1956), p. 4.

The top part of the bodies are tattooed to indicate the tribes to which they belong. The hands are raised in reverence. The costumes are ritual in nature.
The joining of the heads means that the wife has to obey her husband. He will give the orders and she has to obey. The joining also shows that the wife belongs to her

Fig. 10—Wooden Janus figure, Congo, Africa. Warren M. Robbins, *African Art* (London, 1966), p. 188.
husband both physically and mentally. After the unity, the wife will have no mental power of her own because her

Fig. 11—Janiform dance mask, Nigeria, Africa. Eliot Elisofane, Sculpture of Africa (New York, 1958), figure 190.
husband will control whatever she does. In other words, the man will be the dominant power in the family or household. In primitive Africa, the man ranked higher than the woman.

Most African natives believe in life after death. This type of sculpture gives the idea that a married couple hopes to be together again after they die. It is a sort of a promise to love and to care for each other both on earth and in the hereafter. This is an ideal type of sculpture to be given to a married couple by their parents to remind them that they belong to each other forever.

The duality of these sculptures also may be interpreted to represent the homosexuality of man. In Figure 7 the image on the right represents a man having all the physical characteristics of a male. He may think and act like any other normal man, but in his sexual life he prefers to be with another male instead of a female. During such a union, he may take the role of a female. Mentally he becomes a woman and unconsciously he pretends that he has all the physical qualities of a female. The left figure represents the male in a female state of mind.
Combined and related twin-shape masks are very popular with the Africans. Figures 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, and 18 show twin oblongs, forming two similar faces of dual masks.

Fig. 12--Double face mask, Central Region, Africa. R. Goldwater, Senufo Sculpture from West Africa (New York, 1964), figure 27.

The two mask stands make it possible for the dancers to leave the mask in an upright position by pressing the stands into the ground when not in use. In this way, the carvings of the masks will be protected.

These masks are constructed of wood, about four feet taller than a man. The height of the masks gives a sense of superior power and importance to the persons they represent.

Fig. 13—Double face mask, Central Region, Africa. R. Goldwater, *Senufo Sculpture of West Africa* (New York, 1964), Figure 28.

They are very heavy, and it usually takes two persons to move one.7

7Ibid.
These types of masks again represent the dual nature of a man. But in this case, the masks represent yet another duality—the mature nature and the immature nature. One face represents the immature nature of early life and the other represents the matured nature found in adult life. The joining of the two masks along the side shows that a person's nature will grow from immaturity to maturity, but his physical features will remain basically the same all through his life. This is represented by the two identical faces of the mask.

Fig. 14—Double face mask, Korhogo, Africa. R. Goldwater, Senoufo Sculpture from West Africa (New York, 1964), figure 26.
Even in his mature life, he may at times regress to his earlier immature nature because he wants to rationalize his "bad" acts as he did when he was a child. Therefore, it can be said that the two mature and immature natures of a person interact with one another throughout that person's entire life.

Fig. 15—Headdress mask in human form, Boki, Africa. William Fagg, Tribes and Forms in African Art (New York, 1965), p. 58.
The dancers who use this type of mask may dance two separate dances to represent the significance of duality of the masks. Once they have the masks on, the wearers no longer have their own identities; they will represent the personalities of the mask instead.

In the mask illustrated in Figure 16, the mask-maker carved a beard on the left face of the dual mask to show the nature of that person.

Fig. 16--Headdress mask, Keaka, Africa. William Fagg, Tribes and Forms in African Art (New York, 1965), p. 59.
Fig. 17—The dance mask, Senufo Africa. Eliot Eliofson, *Sculpture of Africa* (New York, 1958), figure 111.

The horns reappear in this mask.
Fig. 18—Double mask, Baule, Ivory Coast, Africa. Olive L. Riley, *Masks and Magic* (New York, 1955), figure 37.

This mask shows bulk, thereby requiring two people to move it.
In Africa, crocodiles are much feared by the natives. These animals live together in big groups in order to provide protection for each other, and the natives admire them for their unity. Figure 19 shows one of the very rare duality pieces from the Ivory Coast. It consists of two crocodiles joined together with a single back. This sculpture signifies the symbol of unity in a family. The Africans consider each individual family as a separate family, and the whole tribe as a big family. The two separate heads represent all the small families found in a tribe.
Each family sees and thinks differently, is entitled to its own opinions and is allowed to cope with its own domestic problems; yet, the chief and his council make the decisions for the whole tribe, and these decisions must be obeyed by every family unit. This is the symbolism of the joined backs of the two crocodiles.

The African tribesmen know that their tribe will be strong and powerful in unity as a family. They will be able to defend themselves against attacks of their enemies if they fight together as a tribe. They know that it will be a salvation to them, and they consider it to be right; but if they separated into individual families, their strength will be limited, and they may not be able to survive. This means each family will face extermination from the face of the earth, and this is considered darkness, for which there is no hope.

Duality in Chinese Art

In the period between 206 B.C. and 204 A.D., China emerged as a unified empire. Stimulated by unity and relative peace, profound philosophies and religious concepts made their appearance in the arts.

These were particularly expressed in diagrams of the universe in microcosm, which have been constantly repeated in Asiatic art, with but slight variations until modern times. The most abstract of those diagrams was a circle
bisected by a wavy line, one half being red, the other black. This diagram is called the Yin-Yang and is shown in Figure 20. It is represented by a circle within which are two reversed half circles, each of half the diameter of the inclosing circle. The geometric construction produces the effect of two yolks within a single egg, a highly significant pictograph.

Fig. 20--The Yin-Yang which stand for the Universal symbol of life, China. Herbert P. Whitlock and Martin L. Ehrmann, The Story of Jade (New York, 1949) p. 45.

There is nothing written about its origin or early representations, but its ideas are simple and clear. Basically, it is conceived of as two cosmic forces which give

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rise to the origin of existence. Yin is negative, passive, and disintegrative; the other, Yang, is positive, active, strong, and integrative.\textsuperscript{10}

The conception of Yin-Yang can also be interpreted as a presystematic dualism. The passive and disintegrative Yin represents the dark feminine and negative principle and the active and strong Yang represents the masculine, bright, generative principle. Yin forms the earth and Yang the heaven.\textsuperscript{11} These principles represent the opposition in balance of the positive and negative forces of the universe, male-female and heaven-earth. The principles also portray sexual union, representing the highest balance of which mankind is capable, opposition in unity.\textsuperscript{12}

These ideas of the Yin-Yang have affected every aspect of Chinese life, especially the art work and marriage, and its metaphysics.

According to Chinese belief, anything associated with Yang is believed to have great power as a counteracting force and demon repellent. For this reason, anything colored red (the Yang color) is considered as "lucky" for weddings, the Chinese New Year, and other festivities. That is why money is wrapped in red packets for the Chinese New Year.

\textsuperscript{10}Edwards, \textit{op. cit.}, p. 89.


\textsuperscript{12}Maria Leach, \textit{Dictionary of Folklore, Mythology, and Legend} (New York, 1949), p. 221.
Red is considered as a good luck sign with the hope that it will bring wealth and happiness in years to come.

Yin is associated with colorless things of black or white. These are to be avoided because the Chinese consider them the colors for the dead, or at least, unlucky.

The evil forces of Yin were collectively expressed in art under the form of five loathsome creatures, usually spiders, lizards, centipedes, snakes, and toads. Together they are known as the "Five Poisons." Paradoxically, it is believed that if figures of these animals are displayed, they can ward off the Yin influence which they represent.¹³

Figure 21 shows a pair of fish joined together along the side. These carp are familiar designs throughout the

Fig. 21--Two fish joined bodily together, China. William Willetts, Foundations of Chinese Art (New York, 1965) p. 156.

¹³Runes and Schrickel, op. cit., p. 83.
countryside and for this reason they are used as subjects for portrayal by nature-loving designers.

This piece of art denotes the symbols of domestic happiness and in particular of conjugal fidelity. The paired carp symbolizes sexual union between a couple. It is also regarded as symbolic of literary attainment because the carp is said to struggle against the force of river current and through perseverance to master it.¹⁴

The tremendous reproductive powers of this fish help to associate it in popular imagination with abundant human progeny. The prodigality of its spawn also symbolizes a standard for human prosperity, a symbolism enhanced by the fact that the characters for "fish" and "super abundance" are pronounced as homophones.¹⁵

The two fishes signify that a married couple should remain faithful and love each other for life, and that they will pine away and die if forcibly separated.

This piece of sculpture is usually presented as a wedding gift to a young couple in the hope that they will have a successful marriage with as many children as they wish. The Chinese people believe that if a married couple cannot have any children, that couple is being punished by the gods for something they or their ancestors might have done in the past. It is considered a great disgrace for both

¹⁴Ibid., p. 146.
¹⁵Ibid., pp. 156-157.
the girl and her family if she is barren. To the Chinese, children are a form of wealth and to them life will not be complete without them. That is why an average Chinese family will have about five children.

Figure 22 shows a pair of stylized fish having the same basic duality principles as Figure 21.

Fig. 22—Two fish in primitive pattern, China. Herbert P. Whitlock and Martin L. Ehramanny, *The Story of Jade* (New York, 1949), p. 98.
In this figure, the two fish are joined together by the mouth and by the tail with a circle between them. The circle represents the water in the oceans, lakes, and ponds in which the fish flourish. The two fish clinging so tightly to the circle show how much their lives depend on the water, without which they would surely perish. In the same way as with the fish, human lives are also dependent on water for survival.

The two joined fish represent the lives of a married couple who will then swim through the rest of their lives together.

Fig. 23--Twin birds, China, Daisy Lion Goldschmidt and Jean Claude Moreau Gobard, China Art (New York, 1966), p. 120.
As with the fish, the joining of the two birds in Figure 23 also signifies domestic happiness and conjugal fidelity.

The cups which are used to pledge the union of a Chinese bride and bridegroom are duple, consisting of two tube-like wine containers as shown in Figure 24.

Fig. 24--A cup of twin tubes (Bridal Cup), Ming Period, China. Herbert P. Whitlock and Martin L. Ehrmann, The Story of Jade (New York, 1949), p. 182.
During the wedding ceremony, this special twin cup is filled with wine. The bride will drink from one of the tubes while the bridegroom will drink from the other. This ceremony pledges the union of the couple. To the older Chinese people, this is just like saying "I do" in a modern marriage ceremony.

After the bride and the bridegroom have drunk from the tubes of the cup, they are legally married and from then on they belong to each other. The joining of the two tubes signifies the union of the couple. The wife will have to love, cherish, and obey her husband and the husband in turn must provide love and protection for her. They are bound forever and nothing on earth will be able to separate them legally, for divorce is unheard of in China. This ceremony first appeared during the Ming dynasty.\(^{16}\)

\(^{16}\)Ibid., p. 178.
The double snuff bottle, illustrated in Figure 25, like the bridal cup shown in Figure 24, signifies the union of a male and a female.

Fig. 25--A double snuff bottle, Ching Period, China. Sheridon W. House, The Story of Jade (New York), p. 45.

Figure 26, showing a twin set of vases, also has the same significance and principle of duality illustrated in Figures 24 and 25.
Fig. 26—Pair of Lung Ch'uan vases, Sung Dynasty, China. Albert Willem Rudolf Theil, *Chinese Pottery and Stone Ware* (Los Angeles, 1953), p. 148.

While the shapes are different, the twin tubes, the double snuff bottle, the twin vases and the double vase with cover (See Figure 27) have a common meaning—the union of a couple in marriage.
Fig. 27—Double vase with cover, Ching Dynasty, China. Fujio Koyama and John Figgess, *Two Thousand Years of Oriental Ceramics* (New York, 1961, p. 173).
In ancient China, most of the population worked as farmers growing rice, which is the staple food.

The Chinese people are very superstitious, and every year before they start rice planting, they pray to the mother earth for plenty of rain for that year.

Figure 28 shows a double-headed hydra carved in white nephrite mottled with light brown. This piece of art is offered by the worshippers to the Altar of Mother Earth as a prayer for rain.17

One hydra represents the mother earth and the other represents the worshippers. The joining of the bodies of

Fig. 28—A double-headed hydra, Han Period, China. Herbert P. Whitlock and Martin L. Ehrmann, The Story of Jade (New York, 1949), p. 47.

17Ibid.
the hydras signifies that the Chinese farmers have made a covenant with the mother earth for rain. The pyramid-like piece with many marble-like knots that joins the two hydras together represents the seal of the covenant. It shows that a covenant is established forever and that no power can break it.

The pig-like heads of the hydra represent all the four-footed animals that tread on earth; the two fish tails represent all the living creatures found in the rivers, lakes, streams, and ponds; and the feather-like marks on the bodies of the hydras represent all the creatures that live in the air. The worshippers ask for mercy, not only for themselves, but also for all creatures on earth. Without water, everything on earth would perish.

A rare piece in the form of a full cup composed of two mandarin ducks joined together, the heads and curving necks forming the handles, is seen in Figure 29.18

To the Chinese, mandarin ducks are considered objects of good omen. These birds are always a welcome sight to the people, for they believe that mandarin ducks will bring them wealth and prosperity in the years to come.

The cup between the two ducks represents the wealth, good luck, and happiness in store for the person who drinks from the cup.

18Willets, op. cit., p. 156.
As is believed by people from other countries (e.g., the saying, "Two heads are better than one."), the Chinese believe two, or doubling, adds power. Consequently, the joining of the two ducks signifies the united power the ducks confer on the wishes of the person who drinks from the cup.

Fig. 29—A wishing cup, China. Daisy Lion Goldschmidt and Jean Claude Moreau Gobar, Chinese Art (New York, 1966), p. 186.

This unusual cup is used only during important events of the year, such as the Chinese New Year and birthdays. On either of these days, the head of the family will solemnly drink wine from the cup in the hope that he and his family will have a happy and prosperous year.
The pieces of sculpture illustrated in Figures 30, 31, and 32 signify the unity of a family. The Chinese people of ancient times and even of today have very strong family ties among the members within a family. They believe that in unity they can stand up to any hardship that might come their way. That is why the importance of family unity is being indoctrinated into the teaching of young children at a very early age by their parents.

Fig. 30—Bronze Animal, Shang Dynasty, China. Dagny Carter, *4000 Years of China's Art* (New York, 1948), p. 20.

The two bronze animals, heading in opposite directions, represent the individual children of the family. When they grow up they will go their separate ways, and each will move out from the family home. But even if they live away
from home, their hearts are always still together. They will be still as a united family in their hearts. This is signified by the joining of the two animals.

Fig. 31--Double-Headed Animal, Han Dynasty, China. L. R. Hobson, The Romance of Chinese Art (New York, 1929), p. 175.

The unity of the family is so strong that nothing on earth can break it. If some injustice has been done to any member of the family, it will be remembered by the
entire household many generations to come. If the present family is unable to seek revenge, the injustice will be recalled by their sons and their sons' sons for years till revenge is finally taken.

Fig. 32--Double-Headed Animal, China. Dagny Carter, *4000 Years of China's Art* (New York, 1948), p. 20.
CHAPTER III

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary and Conclusions

Because of the pervasiveness of symbolism in much of the art work of mankind, it is quite natural to assume that the frequent appearance of double imagery in the artistic works of various peoples may be symbolically equated to various philosophical and religious concepts of duality. While on occasion such interpretations at best may be suppositional, a study of African and Chinese life reveals rich cultural bases which support interpretations of dualism as they are manifested in the concrete form of art. From an examination of cultural data and the visual evidence manifested in various examples of art, this study postulates a number of interpretations of selected double images as being symbolic expressions of folklore.

In Africa, the duality of good and evil is represented by the joining together of two sculptured heads back to back. This interpretation parallels a similar dualism found in the religion of Manichaeism which places strong emphasis on the dual nature of man, equating good with light and dark with evil.

Because of variations found in the sculptural treatment of the dual images of Africa, other aspects of polarity are
attributed to certain examples. Figures representing the union, back to back, of man and woman are interpreted as symbolizing the homosexual nature of man. Double-faced masks, with the faces joined along one side, are postulated to be symbolic of the mature and immature natures of man. A sculpture of two crocodiles closely conjoined is interpreted as symbolizing the unity of family and tribe.

Among the Chinese, it is the preoccupation with union of the Yin-Yang, which stands for female and male, that gave rise to duality in the art work of these people. Unlike the duality of the Africans, most of Chinese duality stresses the concept of family harmony, conjugal felicity, and the union between the female and the male. The covenant made between human beings and the mother earth is discussed. This is represented by the two joined hydra.

Recommendations

It is hoped that this investigation will stimulate other students to further study the significance and interpretation of duality in art.

Profitable studies might be made of the various reasons behind this creation of duality in art in areas other than Africa and China. A correlation of these studies could provide new insights in the long continuity of art and its influence on modern man.
The following pages illustrate additional examples of duality as depicted in the art forms of countries other than Africa and China. The artists have represented duality in a variety of human, animal, and object forms. An indication of the wide geographic and cultural distribution of dualistic art is indicated by the countries of origin. These are Belgium, Austria, Denmark, Holland, Italy, Portugal, Russia, Oceania, South America, and Mexico.
Fig. 33—Handle of a wooden spoon, Huon Gulf, Northeast New Guinea. Tibor Bodrogi, *Oceanic Art* (Hungary, 1953), p. 49.
Fig. 34—Skull, New Guinea. Maurice Leenhardt, *Folk Art of Oceania* (France, 1950), p. 23.
Fig. 35—Fisherman's god of shell, Hawaii, Peter H. Buck, Arts and Crafts of Hawaii (Hawaii, 1957), p. 503.
Fig. 36--Bronze Age figures, Bangkinang, South Sumatra. Bernet A. Kempers, Ancient Indonesian Art (Massachusetts, 1959), plate 8.
Fig. 38--Bronze Age figurine, Copenhagen, Denmark. *Encyclopedia of World Art* (London, 1961), plate 178.
Fig. 39—Loom for grinding tobacco, Haida. *Encyclopedia of World Art* (London, 1961), plate 352.
Fig. 40—Double vase, Langenlebarn, Lower Austria. 
Fig. 41—A goat and a cow, Nuragica, Italy. Giovanni Lilliu, Sculpture Della Sardegna Nuragica (Gagiliari, 1956), figure 116.
Fig. 42—Antlered animals, Nuragica, Italy. Giovanni Lilliu, Sculpture Della Sardegna Nuragica (Gagiliari, 1956), p. 57.
Fig. 43—Janus head, Portugal. William F. Buller, *Afro-Portuguese Ivories* (London), p. 24.
Fig. 44--The Janus head, Portugal. William F. Buller, *Afro-Portuguese Ivories* (London), p. 25.
Fig. 45—Anthropomorphised dog, Portugal. William F. Buller, *Afro-Portuguese Ivories* (London), p. 31.
Fig. 46—Vases, Peru, South America. Raoul D'Harcourt, *Arts de l'Amerique* (Paris, 1948), p. 129.
Fig. 47—Figurine bicephale, Colima, Mexico. Andre Emmerich, *Art Before Columbus* (New York, 1963), p. 73.
Fig. 48--Double-headed figurine, Mexico. *Encyclopedia of World Art* (London, 1961), plate 198.
Fig. 49—A man and a woman figurine, Maya, Mexico. Andre Emmerich, Art Before Columbus (New York, 1963), p. 25.
Fig. 50—Double-headed puma, Colombia, South America.
Fig. 51—Two modeled animal heads, Brazil, South America. Wendell C. Bennett, *Ancient Arts of the Andes* (New York, 1954), p. 175.
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