

Envisioning Homosexuality within Daoism - The Orientation and Sexual Dimensions of Yin and Yang

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Short Description

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Abstract

Explicit examinations of homosexuality within Daoism have not been found within academic journals. This paper attempts to begin to address this issue. Drawing upon an understanding of the foundational principles of Daoism, including a yin/yang and alchemical analysis, homosexuality is explored and analyzed within this spiritual/religious tradition. After reviewing these principles within a number of Daoist historical and schools of thought, homosexuality is examined from within Chinese historical and culture perspectives. Utilizing these combined perspectives this paper advances the position that homosexuality is inclusive of the principles of yin/yang and alchemical dynamics. A particular emphasis and analyze will examine the constructs of gender, sexual behavior, and sub cultural context and dynamics regarding how homosexuality incorporates the foundational principles and specific constructs of Daoism. Consequently, the position that homosexuality should be seen within the Dao is advanced.

Keywords: Homosexuality; Daoism; Yin; Yang; Alchemy.

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Received: July 25, 2015

Accepted: October 13, 2015

Published: October 19, 2015

Citation: Bruce D. LeBlanc (2015) Envisioning Homosexuality within Daoism - The Orientation and Sexual Dimensions of Yin and Yang. *Int J Behav Res Psychol*, 3(8), 150-155. doi: <http://dx.doi.org/10.19070/2332-3000-1500027>

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Introduction

As we examine homosexuality within Daoism, with an emphasis on expanding the dimensional understandings of yin and yang, we must start by exploring the nature of humanity within this philosophical and religious tradition. This exploration will include brief glimpses into classic, alchemical, divinational, internal-alchemical and action and karma Daoism. After briefly exploring these foundations, including the dynamics of yin and yang, the nature of sexuality within the Daoist tradition is explored. These two foundations will be used for the comparative analysis of homosexuality and, through the use of Chinese historical references and contemporary Western frameworks, a reconciling integration of homosexuality. From these foundations an expansive application of yin and yang will be advanced.

Our foundational exploration of Daoism begins with The Classical Period (700-220 BCE) and an understanding of Dao (Tao),

as "...an impersonal and unnamed force behind the workings of the universe" [12]. The sages of this period embraced wu-wei, a process of "...going with the principles of the Tao" [13], which involved the lack of using force. Thus, sages were attempting to cultivate life and did so through physical and lifestyle/attitudinal practices. Physical practices involved breath work, calisthenics, and techniques involving the cultivation of sexual energy. Regarding lifestyle/attitudinal practices; desires, attachment, and activities that stimulate the mind, emotions, and senses advance ill health. In comparison to the benevolent Dao, of the Classic Period, the Dao of the Warring States period was more neutral, yet remained the origin of everything wherein "all" shared a common ancestry, and "...all things had equal standing in the universe" [14]. This led to the advancement of Chuang-tzu's [Zhuang zi] "principle of equality of all things" [11, 14].

Since all originates and returns to the Dao (Tao), change, via motion, allows seeing patterns of change. Change is conceptualized as tai-chi, and in an older Wu-chi' [Wu qi] diagram there is a concentric halving of the yang (creation) and yin, (dissolution). Within this diagram of tai-chi, the inner circle is ancient yang and ancient yin, followed by greater yang and greater yin, with the circle farthest out from the center being lesser yang and lesser yin. For the Daoist yang and yin, as well as the pa-k'ua [ba gua] and five elements are the foundational building blocks of everything. Regarding yang and yin, the I-ching [Yi jing] referred to these as complementary opposite pairs, including male and female. As opposites yin was seen as "...stillness, tranquility, softness, flexibility, female, and receptivity; and yang became associated with movement, activity, hardness, strength, male and initiative" [15]. Thus through movement and stillness yang and yin generate greater or lesser yang and yin within T'ai-chi [Tai ji]. Additionally, movement and stillness of yin and yang generates the pa-k'ua of ch'ien [qi'an] (sky), k'un [kun] (earth), k'an (water), li [li'] (fire), chen [zhen] (thunder), sun [xun] (wind), ken [gen] (mountain) and tui [dui] (lake) [11].

This brief summarization of yin and yang and pa-k'ua [ba gua] helps with understanding alchemical Daoism (Taoism). While alchemical Daoism involves two forms of physiological alchemy, external and internal, it is internal alchemy that is more relevant to this presentation as it maintains that "...all the ingredients of immortality are found inside the body" [16], wherein the goal of internal alchemy is the transformation of the mind and body for longevity and health. Within this system it is extremely important to create and renew yin and yang via copulation, as well as through the application of how to use fire (yang) and water (yin) to cultivate energy while renewing life. Essentially, "life is renewed when impurities in the body are purged" [17]. One of the ways of cultivating energy was through sexual expression as noted by Tsan-tung-chi: "When ch'ien [qi'an] [sky or male] moves, it becomes erect. The vapor spreads as the generative energy flows. When k'un [kun] [earth, or female], is still, it contracts, becoming the furnace in the lodge of the Tao. Apply firmness, then withdraw. Transform it into softness to provide stimulation" [18]. Also within the alchemical tradition Wong notes Ko Hung's (P'ao-p'u-tzu) [Ge hong's {Bao pu zi}] position that physical techniques for the promotion of a long life must be accompanied by a correct mental attitude. Additionally Wong comments that during the Sung dynasty (960-1279 CE), Chen Hsi-yi advanced ideas, drawn from the I-ching [Yi jing] and Confucius, of cultivating virtue and circulating energy through physical techniques. Wong also recognizes Chang Po-tuan, also within the Sung dynasty, who "advocated the dual cultivation of the body and mind and combined methods of emptying the mind with physical techniques for circulating internal energy" [19], including the use of sexual techniques if undertaken in the early stages of body cultivation.

This alchemical Daoism is further expanded within the "way of transformation," advanced by internal-alchemical Daoism. Some basic ideas of this practice of Daoism include:

"Before we were born, we were a part of the Tao. Formless and undifferentiated from the Tao"..... "When the generative energies of the father and mother come together, energy from the Tao is drawn into the womb of the mother to form a fetus".....and when the fetus is born.... "its internal energy is separated into three components: generative (ching), vital (ch'i [ji]) and spirit energy (shen)".....and thus "the practice of internal alchemy begins with realizing that the leakage of energy is the cause of many physical and mental problems in life" [20].

What is necessary is the recovery of the pre-birth energies, for one's health and longevity, and that occurs through internal transformations. Through the utilization of various fields of energy in the body (The Furnace, the Cauldron, and the Tan-t'ien [Dan tians] (elixir fields)), energy is transformed. In the lower tan-t'ien [dan tian], the region of the naval, generative energy is transformed into breath energy, which is then transformed in the middle t'ien [tian], located in the heart region, into spirit energy. This spirit energy is then transformed in the upper t'ien [tian], located between the eyebrows, into "the primordial vapor of the Tao" [21].

The transformative process within internal-alchemical Daoism involves adjustments to the fires in the tan-t'ien [tians], thus there is a need to know when to utilize fast or slow fires as one utilizes yang and yin fire. Regarding the nature of these fires "yang fire refers to fast breathing and it is used to direct the fire to the middle and upper tan-t'ien [tians]. Yin fire refers to soft, slow breathing

and it is used to incubate the internal energy" [22]. The interplay of yang and yin energies is also seen in the principle of the Copulation of the Dragon and Tiger, where yin is the dragon and yang the tiger. The copulation or union of yin and yang is seen through body symmetry where the "...back of body is yang and the front in yin; the left side of the body is yang and the right side yin; the upper body is yang and the lower part yin" [22]. Unification of these energies is accomplished through the dissolution of barriers and blockages, which allow the energies of yin and yang to meet and be transformed in the internal cauldrons.

Within internal-alchemical Daoism this process involves the activation of three stages, the first which builds foundations, the second that transforms the internal energies, and the third that "completes" the alchemical works. The first stage involves external (wai-chuang) strengthening, focusing on the muscles, ligaments, joints, and spinal column; as well as internal strengthening (nei-chuang), that massages the internal organs and stimulation of the nervous system. The final process in the first stage is refining the mind (lien-hsin) to still the mind, minimize desire, and develop an uninterested mind regarding excitement and sensual stimulation. The middle stage (lien-ching-hua-ch'i) "focuses on gathering, refining, and transforming generative energy" [23]. One method for transforming generative energy is through paired sexual activity. In the paired sexual activity generative energy can be gathered from one's partner. Yet, for the generative energy to be available for utilization the sexual acts must not be procreative or involve sexual pleasure or desire, as either of these depletes the generative energy. The generative energy is then refined in the furnaces, by regulating breath, sealing cauldrons so energy will not be drained, and transforming energy (ch'i [ji]) into vital energy. The refinement of ch'i [ji] needs to minimize changes in one's emotional state, including the avoidance of anger, fear, sadness and frustration. The internal alchemical work (lien-shen-huan-hsu) wherein ch'i [ji] is refined in the upper tan-t'ien [dan tian], involves the emptying of thoughts within the mind, extinguishing the duality of object and subject, and "being in a state of total emptiness" [11, 24]. Thus there is the transformation of the three energies-generative, vital and spirit, to "their original undifferentiated state is the emergence of the seed of the Tao" [24].

The Action and Karma School of Daoism provides another relevant foundation for the topic at hand. This school is concerned with everyday issues and right ethical actions. The foundations of this school maintain that good acts are harmonious with the Celestial Way, while malevolent acts are opposed to the Celestial Way. Thus, as noted by Wong, T'ai-p'ing ching maintains that one should "accumulate good deeds, and property will come from the Tao" [25]. Essentially, good actions can mitigate that which causes illness, while doing wrong can encourage the development of illness. Two relevant beliefs of this school of Daoism are: "For every action, there is a response from the Tao" and "....rewards can be health and longevity as well as wealth and prosperity, and retribution can be illness or shortening of the life span as well as poverty and misfortune" [11, 28].

Having provided some foundations regarding sexuality within the Daoist perspective, it is important to provide a brief review, and thus understanding regarding homosexuality within Chinese culture, as well as within Daoism. For this investigation we will draw upon two major works, the first written by Dr. Fang Fu Ruan titled *Sex in China, Studies in Sexology in Chinese Culture*, while the second was written by Dr. Stephen Chang entitled, *The Tao of*

Dr. Ruan presents what is understood about classical Chinese sexology even though most of the formal classical texts have been lost. Ruan comments that there is a relationship between classical sexology, traditional Chinese medicine, and Daoist sexual techniques, all of which have a common foundation based on "the principles of Yin and Yang, the five elements, and the concept of chi (vital energy)" [28]. One important concept within Chinese sexology is the "seven injuries and eight advantages" (qui sun ba yi /qi qun ba yi) [27]. It is through this concept that the two principles (Yin and Yang) "...can be brought into harmony" [27]. Furthermore, Ruan highlights the *Methods of Intercourse between Yin and Yang*, which describes in great detail the process of not only intercourse, but foreplay, a process that involves vital energy (chi), in such a manner that the latter may be sufficiently arousing that "consummation" is not necessary. Yet, through sexual intercourse there is a movement of chi that is balanced between that which is hard (penis) and soft (vagina), which promotes the "natural way of Heaven and Earth" [28]. The naturalness of sexual activity is essential as and supported when Ruan cites Ge Hong, "It is inadmissible that man should sit and bring illness and anxieties upon himself by not engaging in sexual intercourse. But then again, if he wishes to indulge his lusts and cannot moderate his dispersals, he hacks away at this very life" [28]. Although one must not be lustful, this sexual naturalness need not be confined to one partner, as "changing of partners can lead to longevity and immortality. If a man unites with one woman only, the Yin chi [vital energy] is feeble and the benefit small" [28]. Even though one can have sex with more than one person, within these encounters it is the exchange of vital energy that is essential, because if the male has no emission he will remain fit and his complexion perfect into old age. This latter behavior is the central component, or essence, of the Art of the Bedchamber. So important is sexual activity that Ruan cites Pheng Tsu [Peng zu] in *On Delaying Destiny* who commented, "...man does not want to be without women; if he has to do without her his mind will become restive, if his mind becomes restive his shen (spirit) will become fatigued, and his life-span will be shortened" [29]. Yet, Ruan notes Tsu's comment that if a man could remain serene, not being bothered by sexual thoughts, that would be ideal, yet he believes that "...there is not one among ten thousand who can do it" [29].

Regarding homosexuality within Chinese society and culture, Ruan recounts that stories regarding homosexuality can be found in "The Difficulties of Persuasion" which includes the story of king Ling and his love for Mi Tzu-hsia [Mi ziheng]. Mi violated a law by taking the carriage of the king but was not punished for his act but rather praised for his "filial piety." Additionally, Mi saved half a peach for the king, for which the king acknowledged Mi's love publically, which led to the expression "sharing the remaining peach" (yu-tao). A second story involves the Emperor Han Ai-ti (6 B.C.- 1 A.D.) who loved Dong Xian and while the two were napping together Emperor Ai-ti cut his long sleeved gown so as not to disturb Xian's sleep. This gave rise to the usage of "the cut sleeve" (tuan hsiu). Both yu-tao and tuan hsiu refer to homosexuality. Beyond these imperial stories, homosexuality was known and accepted during the Zhou and Han Dynasties, while also being seen in the Ming and Ching Dynasties. During the Zhou Dynasty one story involved Qi Jing Long, who received the glance of an officer because of his beauty. The king noted that if the officer had sex with the king, the death penalty would result. Yet, a premier, Master Yen, informed the king that "...it was not

right to reject sexual desire, and not good to reject love" [30]. Also during this dynasty homosexual seduction was used as a weapon of the military or politicians, as it was believed "...a beautiful man can seduce an old man" [30]. Ruan goes on to note that during the Han Dynasty ".....ten of the eleven emperors had at least one homosexual lover or expressed some homosexual proclivities" [31]. More significantly Guo-ti, the founder of the Han Dynasty, had a homosexual relationship with Ji-ru; while Wu-ti, the Marital Emperor, had male partners including Han Yen, Wei Qing, and Huo Chu-bin, the former a court musician and while the latter two were generals. Outside of these social elites it was during the Ching Dynasty that homosexuality was seen beyond this social group. During the Ching Dynasty the status of shialmg gung/gu emerged. This status referred to males acting as females, or to the male homosexual's lover. An occupation was associated with the status of shialmg-gung, which flourished, was where males dressed as females and had male admirers. Another homosexual outlet during the Ching dynasty was providing younger male monks, for a significant fee, to powerful men [8].

From this foundational discussion of Daoism and then the specific related understanding of how sexuality and homosexuality have existed within Chinese culture and Daoism, a sufficient background has been provided to undertake an applicational analysis that will propose an expansion of the application of these concepts in a affirmational manner to homosexuality within Daoism. More specifically, the expansion of the understandings and applications of yin and yang, in an affirmative manner, will be argued.

When one looks holistically at the brief presentation of the Dao, Yin and Yang, sexuality and homosexuality, the expanding of Yin and Yang within the Dao and Daoism must be carefully constructed. Recognition must be given to the historical understandings of Yin and Yang within the framework on not only chi but also chi within not only individual men and women, but relationally between men and women. As such it must be acknowledged that the normative state of Yin and Yang and thus male and female is a complementary relationship, as highlighted by Drs. Ruan and Chang. Thus within the Daoist framework the nature of not only the "natural" relationship for humans, but also the "natural" sexual relationship for humans would be that of male and female who embrace and share the chi of life through their utilization of their dominant yang and yin, respectively. Yet, as noted by Chang, each sex is imbued with both Yin and Yang. Thus the traditionally Daoist visual portrayal of yin and yang encapsulates this reality. This position is supported not by research regarding Chinese and Daoist relationships and sexuality, but rather is supported by research within the Western traditions, most notably the National Health and Social Life Survey (NHSLs) [2]. This research found that about ten percent of males and eight percent of females identified themselves behaviorally, by desires, or through direct self-identification as homosexual. Thus nearly ninety percent of the population identifies themselves as heterosexual. Consequently, the "normative" nature of complementary pairing would be that of male and female and might be visually conceptualized as occupying most of the symbol for Daoism, while conceptualizing homosexuality within this symbol would occupy only a portion of the Daoist symbol. While acknowledging heterosexuality as normative, this dominant complimentary pairing of the opposite sexes being attracted to one another within heterosexuality is not scientifically substantiated. Essentially, the causes of the sexual orientation of heterosexuality have not been adequately researched in humans.

Now as we transition and expand the discussion to include homosexuality one first must confront the question raised by Yuan Mei and Chi Yun of the nature versus nurture positions. Yuan Mei, a famous Ching Dynasty author, relates a story of a man who appeared more feminine and did not get along with his wife. He was a man who was portrayed as wanting to be more of a man's concubine than a husband to his wife. This man was compared to a tree, that has many different branches, and therefore that this state of his being was something he was born with, just as a tree has its branches. In contrast Chi Yun in his writings noted that lusting after women was part of the "natural sexual drive," while desiring a catamite was not. He believed such lusting or desires for catamites came about from socialization or seduction processes. Thus Mei represents the "nature" position, while Yun represents the "nurture" position regarding the origins or causes of an individual's homosexuality.

To respond to the positions posed by Mei and Yun, we again must draw upon Western research since within the Chinese and/or Daoist positions there has been no significant research endeavors to answer the nature/nurture question. While the question of nature or nurture has not been "answered" within the Western tradition, a few research studies provide some support for a nature position. The first of the studies involves the examination of identical twins. This study found that if one male was homosexual in identical twins that over one half, fifty-two percent, of the other twins were homosexual [10]. A second study, conducted by the same researchers, found that the same finding was true for female homosexuals. Thus the correlational conclusion was that homosexuality is a heritable characteristic. In a more physiological study Simon Levy found that an anterior portion of the hypothalamus, which is agreed upon or understood to be related to sexual drive (towards the object of attraction/desire), is anatomically similar in size for heterosexual women as it is in homosexual men, while the same area of the hypothalamus is larger in heterosexual men, as it related to sexual orientation [5]. While these findings do not prove that homosexuality, either as a sexual orientation or behavior, is biological and thus of "nature," such findings cannot be dismissed. Both the genetic connection supported by the twin studies, and the organic connection found in the Levy study support a "nature" position regarding homosexuality. Consequently, the nature position must be considered not only as part of Western culture but also Eastern and Asian culture and Daoism.

Thus it can be argued that homosexuality within the Eastern and Daoist framework, as supported by this nature position and because of the noted genetic and organic findings, is part of the Dao. It would not only be part of the universe, but would also share the common ancestry of Dao, as conceptualized during the Warring States period. Furthermore, if something has a natural genesis, not merely behavioral, as conceptualized by the alchemical Daoist, homosexuals and homosexual behavior would have to be seen within the context that "before we were born, we were all part of the Tao" [20] and thus a natural human condition, albeit for a smaller portion of humanity. The alchemical Daoists, through maintaining that "all the ingredients of immortality are found inside the body" can also be used as a supportive context for the innate naturalness of homosexuality because of these organic and genetic findings.

The support for a nature position also can draw upon the writings of Ko Hung and the construct that long life needs to be connected with "a correct mental attitude." Thus a homosexual

male, at least as seen in Levy's study, who has a portion of the brain that is associated with sexual drive, and secondarily sexual orientation, that is correspondingly like that of a female heterosexual, would need to act in accordance with their physiology. In addition their correct mental attitude would be the enactment of the internal drives of that region of the brain. To act contrary to those drives would not be enacting the appropriate mental attitude. Additionally, drawing upon the action and karma school of Daoism, one must "accumulate good deeds" and such good acts are "harmonious with the Celestial Way." Conceptually, how could one's denial of the physiological nature of their sexual orientation, in this case homosexuality, and any actions resultant of that denial be considered "good deeds?" Such evidence of this denial is seen within the homosexual community by individuals who embrace heterosexual relationships for periods of their life and then either have extra, relational/marriage affairs or by "coming out" during their mid-life. The damage that is inflicted upon their partners cannot be considered a "good deed," nor is it "harmonious," not to mention the internal disharmony such actions cause. The eventual "coming out," at least from a Daoist perspective, could be conceived as a "response from the Tao," that will not allow the internal nature of the individual to live a disharmonious life, nor continue to undertake "bad" deeds. Thus if one is to live a life that promotes harmony, internally and externally, one must live a life that allows one's ch'i [ji] to be enhanced, through the refinements previously noted, and as such would need to minimize negative emotional states, such as frustration or sadness. Not being true to one's physiology, through internal or external denial, can promote such negative emotional states. Consequently, ch'i [ji] would not be enhanced and one's life and health would be impacted. Additionally, Pheng Tsu's [Peng zu] comment that if man does without a woman that his mind is restive, and if restive the man will have a fatigued spirit and shortened life, although specifically noting a heterosexual pairing, can be applied to homosexuals as well. If the homosexual does not enact that which their physiology is "calling forth," then their minds can also become restive, just as is proposed for heterosexuals. If restive they correspondingly have the potential to create a fatigued spirit and a shortened life. Therefore to maintain one's spirit (shen) the homosexual should embrace the seeking out of their desired partner, as any demand for living a non-sexual life, although an ideal (for heterosexuals), seems unlikely. Remember that Tsu noted that not one in ten thousand might be able to embrace such a decision.

Beyond this purely genetic and organic orientation, this position also embraces the essential elements of yin and yang. Remember that within Chinese medicine both yin and yang are necessary and that men and women have both, even while one is dominant within each sex. Not only are they necessary as Chang commented, because of the hormonal dimensions of yin and yang, men and women can, and sometimes desire, to express the masculine and feminine dimension of either in their lives. Not only are there expressions of yin and yang in males and females, there remains that complementary dimensions, and resultant balances that exist between the sexes. So how does the physiology of yin and yang and any complementary nature of these "energies," apply to homosexuality. Before commenting on the any applicability to yin and yang, a brief examination of any complementary dimensions of homosexual relationships is warranted.

Expressions of masculinity and femininity have been researched in relationships, including homosexual relationships. For heterosexual couples the consistent findings, albeit with some younger

generational changes, hold that specific household tasks and gendered behaviors are undertaken and enacted by males or females in these relationships. Through limited research the same seems to hold true for homosexual relationships. Five research studies [4, 6, 7, 9] found that an enactment of predominantly either male or female instrumental or socio-emotional roles was undertaken by the respective partners in female and male homosexual relationships. In the homosexual relationships studied complementary roles were enacted in these relationships where one partner enacted male identified roles, while the other partner enacted female identified roles. Such role enactments can also extend into the realm of intimacy and sexual behavior. Within the female homosexual community this can be seen when a "butch" female is in a relationship with a "lipstick lesbian," the former embracing more masculine traits, while the latter is extremely feminine. While, within the male homosexual community the complementary gendered relationship would be that of a "macho," or masculine male and a "femme," or feminized male. Sexually this is seen in homosexual relationships where one is more of a "top" and the other a "bottom." The top plays the more assertive, and/or insertive, role in the sexual encounter. For a female homosexual relationship this might involve the use of a "strap-on dildo," while in a male homosexual relationship it would involve genital insertion, the former into the vagina and the latter into the anus.

This complementary social behavioral dimension of homosexual relationships provides the context for supporting the enactment of yin and yang within these relationships. The enactment of these complementary gendered roles is viewed as an expression of yin and yang, within the lipstick/butch and femme/macho homosexual relationships respectively. The lipstick female and femme male respectively would display the yin social characteristics of being tranquil, soft and flexible; while the butch female and macho male would display the yang social characteristics of movement, activity, and strength.

Regarding the application of yin and yang to the sexual dimensions of a homosexual relationship the engagement of the internal furnaces, including through sexual activity, for the refinement of ch'i [ji] is utilized. Recall that Ge Hong noted that it would be wrong for a man to become ill and anxious by not engaging in sexual intercourse, but must do so without indulgence, although it is acceptable with multiple partners (at least for men). Also remember that Tsan-tung-chi vividly describes sexual intercourse as a means of renewing life by creating vital energy. Thus the first conclusion, whether one embraces the nature or nurture position, is that sexual activity is necessary for one's life, including one's ch'i [ji]. Consequently, in intercourse the exterior yang enters the interior yin, thus promoting intersexual balance. As it applies to homosexual couples, the "top" male with yang energy would enter the "bottom" male with this yin energy; while for female couples the natural sharing of energies is not facilitated by the use of the inanimate dildo, as noted by Chang, but can still be facilitated through the use of one's ch'i [ji] that is shared through digital and/or oral stimulation by the "dominant" female to the "receptive" female in the relationship. Both enactments were recognized by Chong and reiterated here.

Also within the context of sexual expression one can use breathing to enhance the energies of yin and yang, as advanced by internal-chemical Daoism. This is most readily accomplished through the sexual response cycle wherein breathing for the active partner can escalate and deepen, particularly as they reach orgasm. As

such the active and/or insertive, partner would be using breath work to facilitate the development of their yang energy, if done with the intentions to fuel the internal fires. Contrastingly, the passive and/or receptive partner could breathe slowly thus incubating not only their internal energies, but also the energies shared through the sexual experience. Thus if one has intentionality regarding the utilization of sexual practices to enhance one's vital energy, through right intention and mind, it is proposed that one can have a magnification of vital energy within such homosexual sexual encounters.

Finally, for physical behaviors beyond the potential energy dynamics of penetrative sexual activity, foreplay (as noted by Ruan), if sufficiently arousing and because it involves ch'i [ji] or vital energy, can be enough that sexual endeavors need not progress to sexual intercourse. Thus within homosexual pairings, even beyond any aforementioned penetrative behaviors, these individuals are certainly capable of engaging in foreplay and thus can stimulate vital energy for themselves and their partners.

Yet physiologically there is a further dimension of yin and yang that can be analyzed within a homosexual relational context that involves the positions of the body during sexual behaviors that might facilitate the flow and enhancement of vital energy or ch'i [ji] between partners. Here it is necessary to recall the internal-chemical Daoist position that yin and yang can be connected via body symmetry. Recall that this symmetry involves the front of the body (yin) and the back of the body (yang) and the upper body (yang) with the lower body (yin). Therefore within a sexual behavioral context homosexuals as well can engage in behaviors that enhance this symmetry. More specifically within homosexual male sexual encounters if the "top" male enters the "bottom" male from a rear entry position, their front would be encountering their partners back. As such the yang of the "bottom" would be encountering the yin of the "top" in a context that has the more gendered male "top" with their yang, also interacting with the female gendered male "bottom's" yin. Thus there are two complementary interactions of yin and yang. Another example would involve oral sexual behaviors where the upper body of one partner encounters the lower body of the other partner. This most certainly occurs when couples, of any sexual orientation, engage in oral sexual stimulation. The upper body yang intersects with the lower body yin in both fellatio and cunnilingus. Again the gendered dimensions of the argument can be applied to both male and female homosexual couples, particularly when it is the gendered "male" that is performing oral sex on their gendered "female" partners. Therefore within these sexual acts, if done with "mindful" intention for the enhancement of ch'i [ji], the complementary dimensions and interactions of yin and yang can be utilized and facilitated through these sexual acts.

Another dimension of a complementary dimension of homosexual relationships can be seen in the multigenerational or economic dynamics seen within some homosexual couples, which are viewed as expressions of yin and yang. The most visual complementary pairing is when an older person dates a significantly younger person. One conceptualization of this within the male homosexual community is the "daddy"/ "son," (of legal age) pairing. This type of relationship is multigenerational with the older partner generally being at least fifteen to twenty years older than the younger partner. Within these relationships the older partner brings a social, economic, and often psychological stability, and consequently, within the context of this paper, more yang to the

relationship. In contrast the younger partner draws upon this social and psychological stability and can provide nurturing to the older partner. Thus the younger partner, within the context of this paper, expresses more yin in the relationship. An examination of over five hundred online profiles from mainland China, at a sight dedicated to multigenerational homosexual relationships, found a vast majority of these individuals seeking to find such an older male partner. Additionally, over three hundred of these individuals indicated that one of their preferences was to be the "bottom" within the sexual relationship with these older partners. Thus not only is the complementary nature of yang and yin desired within the social gendered relationship, it is also specifically sought out sexually within the desired relationship [3]. Again, while not establishing causation, these multigenerational pairings of contrasts provide additional support for a complementary relationship that because of these dynamics can facilitate the yin and yang of both individuals. As such, these relationships provide further support of the naturalness of homosexuality as it relates to the Dao.

Conclusion

Although there has been some affirmation of homosexuality within the Chinese and Daoist traditions, this affirmation has been somewhat limited regarding the integration of contemporary scientific and cultural research. This analysis attempted to expand and deepen an affirmation and integrative position for homosexuality within Daoism, with a particular reflection, and expansion, of yin and yang to this sexual orientation; while recognizing that such a position is outside the traditional Daoist position of he yin/yang and male/female and the creation of life. This affirmational position was accomplished through the use of not only more current physiological research, but also cultural research.

While certainly not an exhaustive analysis of these concepts with an application to homosexuality, this analysis provided a clearly articulated position regarding how homosexuality can be affirmatively and integratively supported within Daoism. The physiological and genetic evidence provides the most supportive evidence for this position. While not scientifically causative, the strong correlative implications within a physiologically agreed upon location of biological and/or psychological drives in the hypothalamus, cannot be dismissed. This combined with the genetic heritability seen in identical twins provides further evidence to support a nature position regarding homosexuality. Consequently, if a nature position is supported, even with this correlational evidence, this sexuality orientation must be seen as of nature within the Dao.

From this physiological and genetic foundation a direct application, and expansion, of how yin and yang can be viewing within homosexual sexual and social relationships was argued. Just as with Western culture mere historical understandings and frameworks for understanding yin and yang must be examined. A detailed and potentially graphic application of yin and yang was presented regarding not only homosexual sexual behaviors, but also complimentary social pairings seen within segments of the homosexual community.

Combined the physiological, genetic, and complimentary pairings seen within homosexuality and the articulated applications of yin and yang provide a clear theoretical position for the naturalness of homosexuality within Daoism. From this theoretical position further discussion can and should be undertaken regarding the

nuances of homosexuality within Daoism and in particular how yin and yang can be cultivated within such relationships.

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