

SURVEY of OPPOSITES.

A STUDY of HOW OPPOSITES UNIFY & COLLIDE.

The unity of opposites was first suggested by Heraclitus (ca. 535–475 BC) a pre-Socratic Greek philosopher. The unity of opposites refers to a pair of opposites that are unified in relation to their opposition. Unity of opposites is the central category of dialectics, and it is viewed sometimes as a metaphysical concept, a philosophical concept or a scientific concept. It defines a situation in which the existence or identity of a thing (or situation) depends on the co-existence of at least two conditions which are opposite to each other, yet dependent on each other and presupposing each other, within a field of tension.

Philosophers for some time have been contemplating the notion of opposites. The material world was composed by some indefinite, boundless cosmology from which arose the elements (earth, air, fire, water) and pairs of opposites (hot/cold, wet/dry). As a single object persists through opposite properties, this object undergoes change. The universe is in constant change. A war of opposites = a continuum of change. A unity of opposites will be present in the universe as difference and sameness, fluctuating with time and space, but remaining constant.

A. UNITY of OPPOSITES. Answer the questions below.

_1. Define the word *opposites*?

_2. Define the word *unity*?

_3. How are opposites connected?

_4. List the opposite to each of the following words?

Green / _____, Sunny / _____, Water / _____, Sky / _____, Under / _____,
Inside / _____, Bird / _____, Love / _____, Warm / _____, Close / _____,
Texture / _____, Form / _____, System / _____, Text / _____, War / _____,
Time / _____, Space / _____, Earth / _____, Static / _____, Life / _____,
Ritual / _____, Identity / _____, Memory / _____, Micro / _____,
Empathy / _____, Place / _____, Loss / _____, Environment / _____.

_5. How are opposites connected to your daily life?

_6. Pick 10 pairs of opposites that connect to a subject of interest. Examples are below. What made you pick these pairs?

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____ 4. _____ 5. _____
6. _____ 7. _____ 8. _____ 9. _____ 10. _____

after/before • answer/question • any/none • arrive/depart • behind/ahead • black/white • brave/cowardly • bright/dull • cold/hot • cool/warm • crazy/sane • curly/straight • dark/light • day/night • dim/bright • dumb/smart • easy/hard • every/none • everything/nothing • fact/fiction • famous/unknown • fast/slow • fat/thin • good/bad • girl/boy • grim/happy • happy/sad • hairy/bald • hard/easy • heavy/light • here/there • his/hers • hot/cold • hope/despair • huge/small • interesting/dull • kids/adults • kind/mean • length/width • lend/take • less/more • level/uneven • live/die • live/dead • long/short • lost/found • man/woman • many/few • men/women • near/far • neat/messy • never/always • nice/mean • odd/even • old/new • old/young • open/close • open/shut • ornate/simple • part/whole • past/present • perfect/flawed • pretty/ugly • prince/princess • pre/post • push/pull • quiet/noisy • quick/slow • ran/walked • remember/forget • rise/fall • rise/set • run/walk • sat/stood • save/spend • silly/serious • sit/stand • straight/wavy • strong/weak • sunny/cloudy • tall/short • tame/wild • theirs/yours • true/false • under/over • useless/useful • was/is • water/ice • wonder/know • yes/no • yep/nope

_5. How do you approach your own visual language? How can considering opposites help that process?

_6. When analyzing specific pairs of opposites what mood do specific color patterns evoke?

B. TYPOGRAPHY + OPPOSITES. Answer the questions below.

- 1.** What rhythms and patterns do you see in daily typography and typographic forms that connect to opposites?

- 2.** What perspectives or feelings do these opposing systems evoke?

- 3.** How do typographic forms connect to opposing textures or architectural forms? How & why?

- 4.** What is the difference between San Serif and Serif typefaces? How are they opposing?

- 5.** How does a typeface evoke personality? How could juxtaposing two typefaces create opposing perspectives?

C. ANALYZING CONNECTIONS. Pick 3 pairs of opposites and respond to each category.

1.

	Possible Meaning:	Characteristics:	Color connections:
_____	1. _____	1. _____	1. _____
vs.	2. _____	2. _____	2. _____
_____	3. _____	3. _____	3. _____
	4. _____	4. _____	4. _____
[PICK A PAIR OF OPPOSITES]	Cultural References:	Visual forms/symbols:	Shape connections:
	1. _____	1. _____	1. _____
	2. _____	2. _____	2. _____
	3. _____	3. _____	3. _____
	4. _____	4. _____	4. _____

2.

	Possible Meaning:	Characteristics:	Color connections:
_____	1. _____	1. _____	1. _____
vs.	2. _____	2. _____	2. _____
_____	3. _____	3. _____	3. _____
	4. _____	4. _____	4. _____
[PICK A PAIR OF OPPOSITES]	Cultural References:	Visual forms/symbols:	Shape connections:
	1. _____	1. _____	1. _____
	2. _____	2. _____	2. _____
	3. _____	3. _____	3. _____
	4. _____	4. _____	4. _____

3.

	Possible Meaning:	Characteristics:	Color connections:
_____	1. _____	1. _____	1. _____
vs.	2. _____	2. _____	2. _____
_____	3. _____	3. _____	3. _____
	4. _____	4. _____	4. _____
[PICK A PAIR OF OPPOSITES]	Cultural References:	Visual forms/symbols:	Shape connections:
	1. _____	1. _____	1. _____
	2. _____	2. _____	2. _____
	3. _____	3. _____	3. _____
	4. _____	4. _____	4. _____

DESIGN RESEARCH:

Research is an important part of the design process for any project. Research can include a variety of methods including: interviewing stakeholders, analyzing historical connections, market research, budgetary considerations, writing, ideation, creating dissection trees, concept maps, studying user interaction, etc. It's important to consider concepts connected to the knowledge domains

surrounding any project. Research helps you further understand the subject. That could mean reading a book or going to the library. At minimum you should study online resources and make sure you check the sources for authenticity. Below are some considerations for your conceptual development in this project.

| *unity of* OPPOSITES :

The unity of opposites was first suggested by Heraclitus (ca. 535–475 BC) a pre-Socratic Greek philosopher.

Philosophers had for some time been contemplating the notion of opposites. Anaximander posited that every element was an opposite, or connected to an opposite (water is cold, fire is hot). Thus, the material world was composed by some indefinite, boundless apeiron from which arose the elements (earth, air, fire, water) and pairs of opposites (hot/cold, wet/dry). There was, according to Anaximander, a continual war of opposites. Anaximenes of Miletus, a student and successor of Anaximander, replaced this indefinite, boundless arche with air, a known element with neutral properties. According to Anaximenes,

there was not so much a war of opposites, as a continuum of change. Heraclitus, however, did not accept the Milesian monism and replaced their underlying material arche with a single, divine law of the universe, which he called Logos. The universe of Heraclitus is in constant change, but also remaining the same. That is to say, an object moves from point A to point B, thus creating a change, but the underlying law remains the same. Thus, a unity of opposites is present in the universe as difference and sameness. This is a rather broad example though. For a more detailed example we may turn to an aphorism of Heraclitus:

The road up and the road down are the same thing. (Hippolytus, Refutations 9.10.3)

This is an example of a complementary unity of opposites. For, at the same time, this slanted road has the opposite qualities of ascent and descent. According to Heraclitus, everything is in constant flux, and every changing object co-instantiates at least one pair of opposites (though not necessarily in simultaneously) and every pair of opposites is co-instantiated in at least one object. Heraclitus also uses the succession of opposites as a base for change:

Cold things grow hot, a hot thing cold, a moist thing withers, a parched thing is wetted.

As a single object persists through opposite properties, this object undergoes change.

| MODERN PHILOSOPHY :

Unity of opposites is the central category of dialectics, and it is viewed sometimes as a metaphysical concept, a philosophical concept or a scientific concept. It defines a situation in which the existence or identity of a thing (or situation) depends on the co-existence of at least two conditions which are opposite to each other, yet dependent on each other and presupposing each other, within a field of tension.

Dialecticians claim that unity or identity of opposites can exist in reality or in thought. If the opposites were completely balanced, the result would be stasis, but often it is implied that one of the pairs of opposites is larger, stronger or more powerful than the other, such that over time, one of the opposed conditions prevails over the other. Yet rather than 'stasis' the identity of opposites, there being unity within their duality, is taken to be the instance of their very manifestation, the unity between them being the essential principle of making any particular opposite in question extant as either opposing force. For example 'upward' cannot exist unless there is a 'downward', they are opposites but they co-substantiate one another, their unity is that either one exists because the opposite is necessary for the existence of the other, one manifests immediately with the other. Hot would

not be hot without cold, due to there being no contrast by which to define it as 'hot' relative to any other condition, it would not and could not have identity whatsoever if not for its very opposite that makes the necessary prerequisite existence for the opposing condition to be. This is the oneness, unity, principle to the very existence of any opposite. Either one's identity is the contra-posing principle itself, necessitating the other. The criteria for what is opposite is therefore something a priori.

In his criticism of Immanuel Kant, the German philosopher Hegel who tried to systematise dialectical understandings thus wrote:

The principles of the metaphysical philosophy gave rise to the belief that, when cognition lapsed into contradictions, it was a mere accidental aberration, due to some subjective mistake in argument and inference. According to Kant, however, thought has a natural tendency to issue in contradictions or antinomies, whenever it seeks to apprehend the infinite. We have in the latter part of the above paragraph referred to the philosophical importance of the antinomies of reason, and shown how the recognition of their existence helped largely to get rid of the rigid dogmatism of the metaphysics of understanding,

and to direct attention to the Dialectical movement of thought. But here too Kant, as we must add, never got beyond the negative result that the thing-in-itself is unknowable, and never penetrated to the discovery of what the antinomies really and positively mean. That true and positive meaning of the antinomies is this: that every actual thing involves a coexistence of opposed elements. Consequently to know, or, in other words, to comprehend an object is equivalent to being conscious of it as a concrete unity of opposed determinations. The old metaphysics, as we have already seen, when it studied the objects of which it sought a metaphysical knowledge, went to work by applying categories abstractly and to the exclusion of their opposites.

In his philosophy, Hegel ventured to describe quite a few cases of "unity of opposites", including the concepts of Finite and Infinite, Force and Matter, Identity and Difference, Positive and Negative, Form and Content, Chance and Necessity, Cause and effect, Freedom and Necessity, Subjectivity and Objectivity, Means and Ends, Subject and Object, and Abstract and Concrete.

SOURCE: "Unity of opposites." Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia. dia. Wikipedia Foundation, Inc. 12 February 2014. Web. May 2014. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Unity_of_opposites>