

## Manichæism

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Manichæism is a religion founded by the Persian Mani in the latter half of the third century. It purported to be the [true](#) synthesis of all the religious systems then known, and actually consisted of [Zoroastrian Dualism](#), [Babylonian](#) folklore, [Buddhist](#) ethics, and some small and superficial, additions of [Christian](#) elements. As the theory of two eternal principles, [good](#) and [evil](#), is predominant in this fusion of [ideas](#) and gives color to the whole, Manichæism is classified as a form of religious [Dualism](#). It spread with extraordinary rapidity in both East and West and maintained a sporadic and intermittent existence in the West (Africa, [Spain](#), [France](#), North [Italy](#), the Balkans) for a thousand years, but it flourished mainly in the land of its birth, (Mesopotamia, [Babylonia](#), Turkestan) and even further East in Northern [India](#), Western [China](#), and Tibet, where, c. A.D. 1000, the bulk of the population professed its tenets and where it died out at an uncertain date.

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