



The Synthetic Role of Dialectics from Hegelianism and Taoism in Philosophical Investigation into the Complex Inter-civilisational and Human Development Issues

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ARTICLE INFO

Published Online:
17 January 2022

ABSTRACT

Both School of Hegelianism from the Western philosophy and School of Taoism from the ancient Chinese intellectual schools of thoughts can be unquestionably epitomised as two quintessential, enigmatic schools of dialectics, which to a large degree facilitate the intellectual researchers and scholars within the field of philosophy, humanities, social sciences and so forth to theoretically deconstruct and extrapolate the complex, authentic, objective world system and global human civilisations in a dialectical and synthetic fashion instead of the metaphysical and intuitive perspectives alone. In that regard, the hypothetical questions of 1) whether both Hegelianism and Taoism share certain implicit reciprocal conceptual components that may outweigh their explicitly diametrical diversity owing to the explicit heterogeneity in historical background, social development trajectory, and socioeconomic and politico-economic development pattern between the Agrarian Civilisation and the Oceanic Civilisation in history, and of 2) whether their intellectual thoughts and legacies of dialectics can accurately monitor and predict the infinite occurrence of inter-civilisational, international development issues and human development affairs may at least help to construct a thought-provoking theoretical guideline and framework, which are unquestionably worthy of profound theoretic investigation and empirical analysis. The ultimate purpose of this academic manuscript attempts to dialectically identify and deconstruct certain vital dissimilarities and complementarities between Hegelianism and Taoism and philosophically build a theoretical bridge that interconnects them for the sake of follow-up empirical analysis of their differentiated methodologies. Moreover, this paper seeks to in a dialectical fashion evaluate the availability, applicability and functionality of these two intellectual schools in a context of inter-civilisational and international development, especially pertaining to the underlying themes of global economic crisis and macroeconomic recovery, the unprecedented global climate crisis, and global COVID-19 pandemic with much insufficiency of global sanitation partnership reform and imbalanced means of production. This academic manuscript seeks to itemise and quantify the diverse conceptual components between Hegelianism and Taoism as well as qualitative comments on their potential areas that they might share and develop. Additionally, this paper attempts to undertake hermeneutic retrospectives of their legacies of dialectics and case studies of international, inter-civilisational development issues and human development issues. In a nutshell, on a basis of existential research findings so far, this paper draws preliminary conclusions that the reflexivity of

dialectics from Hegelianism and Taoism helps to classify and clarify the implicit dogmatic principles that drive the advancement of global human development, and inter-civilisational development on the grounds of dialectical antithesis as the theoretical guidelines. On the other hand, neither of them can mostly accurately function as a guarantee for maximum prediction and monitoring of world affairs, which necessitates updated data elaboration, comprehensive out-of-box thinking mode, maximum interdisciplinary theoretical breakthroughs and discovery from a maximum dialectical, inter-civilisational perspectives. That can prevent the readers, scholars and researchers from falling into the idealistic solipsism.

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KEYWORDS: Dialectical Materialism; School of Hegelianism; School of Taoism; Inter-civilisational Studies; Developmental Retrospectives; Human Development; Idealistic Solipsism.

1. PROLEGOMENA

Within philosophical discourse of dialectics it is fair to observe that both School of Hegelianism, from classical German philosophy, and School of Taoism, from ancient Chinese intellectual school, can be defined and epitomised as two consequential, indispensable schools of thoughts that have been making phenomenal, exponential influence on the way that the human beings think of individuality, society, state and an objective, authentic world. Because of heterogeneous historical backgrounds, historical experiences, cultural contexts, economic development patterns, productivity mode and so forth between the modern German society and ancient Chinese society in human history, their academic dispositions, philosophical propositions and worldviews of an objective world and the methodologies of evaluating and implementing theirs are by no means literally identical: the authentic nature of School of Hegelianism seeks to attach much more importance to spiritual and metaphysical reasoning from particularity to universality and deconstructing the objectives from universality to particularity on a solid theoretic basis of more logic than intuition whilst a sort of Lao-Tzu-initiating Taoism tends to highlight more intuitive perceptions than rational reasoning and methodical categorisation of diverse objectives.

Albeit those above-mentioned dissimilarities, there might be a hypothetical proposition that as dialectical methodologies can be universally inextricably interwoven, there might be some transmissible interconnections between School of Hegelianism and School of Taoism and there might be something shared from which it could be abstractly inherited. More consequentially, another function of philosophy or intellectual thoughts is to help to adopt a theoretic guideline for substantively solving underlying structural or functional societal issues and even civilisation-relevant issues and

conundrums instead of merely singular interpretations of them without any profound empirical evaluation or pragmatic, valid implementation. Therefore, it is of that extreme necessity for intellectuals, scholars and philosophers to abstractly seek out vital theoretic spotlights as indispensable guiding norms and philosophical framework, especially the essence of dialectics, for the sake of analysing socioeconomic problems and conundrums that almost confront human security development, international development and inter-civilisational development, ranging from non-harmonious relationship between nature and humanity, which causes potential backlashes and repercussions on production, to the anthropogenically-causing climate crisis, imbalanced economic and energy development, restructuring of the international economic and financial systems, to global epidemic diseases that transcend national borders, which is absolutely a matter of shared human security and a development security issue. It could be argued that the destiny of all the Humanity is inextricably interwoven with the grand Nature and grand objective, authentic world.

Therefore, if the philosophical discourse of dialectics can be genuinely implemented, by the grace of School of Hegelianism and School of Taoism as well as numerous alternative intellectual schools concerning dialectics, notwithstanding being tautological in some cases, it may be theoretically valid and reflexivistic that the conceptual guideline from both School of Hegelianism and School of Taoism contains profound transmutability before it may be too late for thoroughly resolving the tricky problems that turn out to be unintelligibly intransmutable. It could be proven that the role of dialectics helps the intellectuals and scholars not to be blindly mesmerised by even unjustifiable and inexplicable complexity or uncertainty of problems and an realistic, unpredictable objective world without any useful theoretical instrument.

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This paper attempts to dialectically and categorically identify the dissimilarities and complementarities between School of Hegelianism, a critical treasure of school of dialecticism within the German philosophy, and School of Taoism, the comparable counterpart in ancient Chinese intellectual schools, and philosophically build a bridge that interconnects them at a theoretic level. Moreover, this paper seeks to evaluate the applicability and functionality of dialectical, methodological implications that both School of Hegelianism and School of Taoism to a large degree develop and their theoretical, reasonable ramifications in a context of certain underlying social-science-relevant issues about inter-civilisational and international development, especially pertaining to the themes of global economic crisis and economic recovery, global climate crisis, and global COVID-19 pandemic and insufficiency of global cooperative reform of public sanitation. The academic paper can be compartmentalised into several parts as follow. To begin with, it is vitally essential for the international intellectual scholars and philosophers to contemplate in what and in what ways individuals and groups can undertake much philosophical inheritance from both School of Hegelianism and School of Taoism from the hermeneutic and latest theoretical perspectives. Second, as the world grows more interconnected, it is meanwhile indispensable to figure out whether there might be some unanticipated, unexpected contradictoriness and complementarity between them from the the perspectives of inter-civilisational and philosophical development that can intrinsically drive social science progress. Last but not least, this academic paper attempts to evaluate whether the feasibility and accuracy of certain inspirational, thought-provoking philosophical intellectual merits between them can better exemplify the state of inter-civilisational and international and human development issues such as global economic crisis, climate crisis and global COVID-19 pandemic, followed by recommendable implications and multidisciplinary theoretical guidelines, rather than a cornucopia of concrete practical, applied, targeted methods, to at least help to monitor those underlying shared issues of human development.

2. CRITICAL DISCOVERY INTO IMPLICIT DYADIC NEXUS BETWEEN SCHOOL OF HEGELIANISM AND TAOISM

2.1 Hegelian Definition and Interpretation of Dialectics-Logic Relationships and Phenomenology of Spirit

Apprehending Hegel’s logic-initiating methodology is a critical

prerequisite to profound, meditative apprehension of the dialectic thinking more than merely comprehend speculative dialectic. There is no doubt that “dialectics will be manifested as the self-development notion of concept in *Logic*” (Jing, 2015: 294). Hegel’s dialectics lead to the redefinition of the well-known universal rules by an intrinsic organic unification in the philosophical system. That is to say, *Logic* does not presuppose any given step or method, but rather categorise itself to regulate its approaches from the perspective of the development of another category. In other words, the self-evolved development mode of logic is indistinguishable from an internal development and criticism instead of non-traditional logic (Jing, 2015). According to the dialectic principle of Logic, in the process of development from one category to another, rules of each category leads to the internal negativity, through which rule of each category attaches much importance to its opposite and thus transiting to the opposite side of this concept, giving rise to a more complicated new category (Jing, 2015). That may be the critical way of conducting logic on the preliminary phase prior to its maturation of self-consciousness and human cognition. Hegel’s dialectic category theory adopts rules of advancing from imperfect category regulation to more definite and perfect category in ranking category, and the standard of completeness lies in the logic-based thought.

It could be observed that one of the trickiest issues with which Hegelian intellectual philosophy furnishes the researchers, intellectuals, and philosophers may refer to the formative process of architectural construction of dialectics and logical system. In comparison with much application of dialectics by his contemporaries, Hegel’s dialectical methodology unveils a unique standpoint of highlighting the actual ramifications of dialectical epistemology and methodology: the intrinsic process from one concept to another from one phase into another phase is the imperceptibly conceptual self-movement rather than exogenous transcendence (Jing, 2015). In other words, the nomenclature of *Dialectics* can actually be epitomised as more affluent and profound form of thoughtful advancement than linear mathematical inference, for while the latter proceeds on lines of strict identity, deducing exclusively what is explicit or almost explicit in some thought-position’s content, dialectics invariably heighten and sublime comments upon its numerous thought-positions, stating intrinsic relations far beyond the obvious content (Findlay, 1977).

In accordance with Hegel, nearly everything bears the characteristics of contradictions and the law of contradiction

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negates the unpredictable, unrecognisable, authentic and objective world; everything varies into its dialectical opposites. Hegel calls the process of things changing into their opposites “dialectical”, and he further reduces this process into a triadic architecture: “thesis” (i.e. abstract universal concept), “antithesis” (i.e. intrinsic contradiction), and “synthesis” (i.e. a complex union of thesis and antithesis). It can be observed that the crucial characteristics of Hegel’s dialectic and the progress of the improvement of Hegel’s self-reasoning and self-cognition lie in the fact that rules of mind has been reconstructed in a systemic form in Logic, or certain norms and principles. On the other hand, this triadic structure can be viewed as part of reflection of the emphasis of School of Hegelianism on law of identity of what it is. Part of Hegelian philosophy attaches much more importance to to the law of identity and the phenomenology of what is actually on a basis of objective observation and factual measurement, which means the strong is actually the strong; the weak is actually the weak, and they are incompatible. On the other hand, School of Hegelianism shows empirical criticism of the law of identity: *The law of identity* in the classical metaphysical sense is the fundamental law of the traditional outlook: each thing is equal to itself. Everything was perpetual. This law has been refuted by natural science bit by bit in each separate case, but theoretically it still prevails and is still put forward by the supporters of the old in opposition to the new: a thing cannot simultaneously be itself and something else (Selsam & Martel, 1987).

Here are the critical questions of what result of the triadic structure could be in real practice and of whether there has been any suspicious points against that methodology. The analysis of existence and non-existence can be a basic exemplary example corresponding to those questions. When it comes to the conception of “existence” and “non-existence”, whatever the interpretation may be, hardly can the proposition that existence and non-existence are of the identical origin and they have different names be acceptable, and after the above-mentioned definition, Hegel’s self-contradiction could be found available: the proposition that Being and Nothing is the same seems so paradoxical to imagination or understandings (Wallace, W. 1975). Such a conceptual proposition might have sounded incredulous in the Western intellectual world prior to the emergence of Hegelianism. On the other hand, it is of much serendipity that in ancient China, this philosophical conception, its comparable discourses and even all the relevant discourses

concerning that proposition that truth sounds paradoxical were considered nothing unusual. In this aspect, it could be noted that the vast lands surrounding the Yellow River basin and the Yangtze River basin had become the cradle of dialectical intellectual thought. The emergence of this thought was probably related to the agricultural cultures in those places, because for an agrarian civilisation, nothing is more impressive and more thought-provoking than the business of sowing and agrarian harvesting (Shi, 2014).

Here is another important question of whether there may be some intrinsic relationships between self-consciousness and dialectics. Concerning this question, If having access to Hegel’s work in services of seeking the answers with spirit, logic and dialectics can be considered, then the “Phenomenology of Spirit” can refer to the categorical advancement and unfolding of the forms of *Spirit*, whilst the changeable actual life is a succession of the ever-developing moments of the identical (Chang, 1926). To put it briefly, *Spirit* in Hegelian sense to some extent refers to self-consciousness and mindset, which is conceived as life and actuality, whose essence of it is development. For historical development, the historical actuality, therefore, is the categorical steps of objective consciousness, and the development of the latter is an epitome of the unfolding stages of *Absolute Spirit* (Chang, 1926). Sequentially, it could be abstractly learned that Hegel interconnected the nature of Man as desire and will to might, or as striving to subjugate nature and make it his own. On the other hand, one sort of self-consciousness may be difficult to attain its subjective satisfaction apart from other self-consciousness. Hence, “common life through mutual recognition is an inevitable course” (Chang, 1926: 26). This mutual recognition is the result of a development from the lowest grades of group-life such as are manifested in the relations of master and slave, etc, up to the form of collective Spirit, and the *Phenomenology of Spirit* offers to interweave the subjective and objective moments closely together and points out the way of “its liberation and elevation form the lowest level of sensuous certainty to the highest of Absolute Knowledge” (Chang, 1926: 26).

Following the task of providing a seamless multidimensional analysis of their implicit ties among essence of logic, triadic structure, dialectics, and Hegelian definition of spirit and historical development, this paper attempts to dialectically discuss in what ways Hegel associated logical reasoning and spirit with major historical incidents in the Hegelianism-based

dialectical fashion. It could be argued that the most simple thing of all is to pass judgements on a solid substantial content; it is more abstruse to grasp it, and most of all difficult things to do both together is produce the systematic exposition of it (Hegel, 1977). A number of “historical phases” can be organically associated with the *Phenomenology of Spirit*, --- “such as the ancient Greek ethics entity, the right of Roman law state, the development of medieval religion, the Enlightenment, the French Revolution and so forth, but Hegel never explicitly revealed them” (Pang, 2012: 185). In accordance with Hegel, “these stages of political history is singularly the phenomenon of the spirit, and the entire political history of the development is the spirit of imagining his process” (Pang, 2012: 185). It can be deduced from that historical trajectory that if universal logic of spirit can profoundly apprehended, the authentic reality of the political history can be econtextualised to some extent afterwards.

2.2 Critical Nexus between School of Taoism and Dialectical Methodological Merits

Over the course of China’s intellectual history, the reputation and interpretation of School of Taoism amongst modern Chinese intellectuals have gone through an evolving process from being imperceptibly stigmatised to being gradually rediscovered (Wang, 2020). For instance, in the late Qing Dynasty and the early 1910’s and 1920’s, especially during the New Culture Movement, Taoism was often viewed as equivalent to the signatory pronoun of superstition, ignorance and autocracy, and was regarded as the manifestation and root cause of China’s social and cultural backwardness (Wang, 2020). For the time being, since the early 1930’s, certain intellectuals and scholars had striven to conduct new round of evaluation of the historical role of School of Taoism from a more positive perspective. Albeit in some ways no elimination of prejudice or stereotype of the entire academic community against School of Taoism after their multiple endeavours, an indelible, imperishable foundation for helping to form a paradigm for further scientific studies and rediscovery has been laid (Wang, 2020). A certain of Chinese scholars oftentimes assume that science and religion are two opposing forces, but Professor Wang Dongjie contends that the multidimensional positioning and understandings of Taoism in modern times, either negative or positive, is highly dependent on science to reevaluate and redefine it, i.e. Taoism’s accomplishments and blemishes and drawbacks may be in the hand of science; in turn, this situation simultaneously reflects the variations and

evolution of intellectuals’ cognition toward science itself for religious philosophy and science can be of much mutual transmissibility and transmutability (Wang, 2020). In real practice, the holistic world on this day is confronting with a series of issues, such as energy crises and deteriorating global ecological environment and circumstance, which have drawn widespread attention to maximum reconsideration and rediscovery into the Taoist dogmatic doctrines of abiding by the law of nature and taking all living creatures into full consideration.

Therefore, the indispensable task of apprehending the subsistence and real nature of *Way* (or *Dao*) may be a prelude to task of apprehending a distinctive Taoism-based dialectical methodology. Lao Tzu conceived of *Way* as the perpetual, omnipresent genesis and law of the purpose and life within it. In accordance with him, the human beings model himself after earth; earth models itself after heaven; heaven models itself after *Dao*, and *Dao* models itself after Nature. Lao Tzu conceived of *Way* as “the phenomenon of change and reversal, in the sense of birth, growth and renewal” (Huo, 2006: 62). Lao Tzu believed in two opposite but complementary forces--yin and yang--that are exercised by everything in the universe: “the hard and soft, strong and weak, long and short, high and low” (Huo, 2006: 62). In accordance with Lao Tzu, “something and nothing grow out of one another; difficulty and simplicity produce one another; long and short offset one another; high and low lean on one another” (Huo, 2006: 62). These pairs of opposites coexist, as none can be without the other. Substance evolves from non-existence into existence, gradually accumulating strength and magnitude until reaches an apotheosis, after which it dwindles, perishes and is even renewed (Huo, 2006).

More broadly speaking, the Taoist School of Thought of dialectics singularly sticks to the abstractness that “Tao derives from nature” that it also bestow to natural philosophy (Lü, 2015). The Taoist philosophy on ecological ethics is called the foundation of Tao, based on which the Taoism-generating methodology refers to the yin-yang dialectics, which may be intrinsically comparable to, and additionally distinct from, Hegel’s antithesis as there was a valuable belief resting from ancient China that the production and development of everything is of that regularity, which can be illustrated by the involvement and iterations of *yin* and *yang* (Shi, 2014). It could be observed that the thought in Lao Tzu is both extensive and profound and Taoism provides a unique view to a variety of

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explicit, objective problems, and its dialectic methodology of the embryonic stage. In compliance with Ren Farong, the director of the China Taoism Association, China has proposed the grand strategy of sustainable development and the grand objective of collaboratively and coordinately building up a harmonious society, followed by China’s urging the international society to create a harmonious, peaceful co-existence with neighbouring states and regions (People’s Daily, 2011). It can be highlighted that this sort of strategy bears a meritocratic philosophical conception of prevalence of public spirit in services of grand course from School of Confucianism and a dialectical retrospective of yin-yang co-existence from School of Taoism.

Additionally, the Taoism-generating natural philosophy values more innovative status of humans. Merely the human beings are capable of approaching nature periodically, instead of moving away from nature. Therefore, to some extent, “Taoism natural philosophy helps to introduce the creation spirit of humans into the field of natural law” (Lü, 2015: 315). Furthermore, the study of Taoism natural philosophy has become a scientific methodology which highlights the cyclical interactions of field, experiments and ecology (Lü, 2015). At present, the academic study on a sort of Taoism-based natural philosophy mainly highlights the people’s attitude and principle in internalising nature from the perspective of the observation that Tao derives from nature, namely “interpreting human culture from the perspective of ecological sense with the basic element of the application and research of modern scientific system” (Lü, 2015: 315).

Notwithstanding the above-mentioned trans-disciplinary interpretations of the essence of the *Way*, or *Dao*, it may remain far-fetched to unveil a clear-cut interpretation and standardised definition of the *Way*, corresponding to paraphrasing of the opening chapters of *Tao Te Ching*: The *Way* that can be describable is not the enduring and unchanging *Way*. The name that can be describable is by no means the enduring and unchanging name. The above-mentioned *Dao* and “name” and the “idea” which the ancient Greek philosopher Plato coincidentally had advocated probably belong to the identical, homogeneous category, and from an epistemological point of view, Lao Tzu’s philosophical argument seems in line with Plato’s argument: every “existence” in reality is transient and hallucinatory, while merely the notion which is out of reality captures an perpetual and genuine existence (Shi, 2014). If things can be considered beyond the existence of one singular

object or nature, then it can be argued that to some extent, School of Taoism seemingly highlights a proportion of philosophical life-relevant ontological objects: “morality, heaven and earth, existence and non-existence, hardness and softness, ruling, humanity, self-discipline and the cultivation of one’s mind” (Shi, 2014: 6). Therefore, *Tao Te Ching* is on one side held to be a work concerning the cosmogony and evolution of the world, on the other side a pamphlet of political tactics and an ethical treatise on the cultivation and self-discipline of the Humanity (Shi, 2014). Professor Shi Ningzhong at Northeast Normal University, who specialises in China Studies and ancient Chinese Philosophical Studies, contends that *Tao Te Ching* implies that in terms of logic of thinking, “a little state with a small population” is the natural ramification and product of a series of logical inferences, or reversely speaking, *Tao Te Ching* demonstrates the justifiability of the dialectical proposition of “a little state with a small population” (Shi, 2014). These statements unequivocally discuss a form of government, state regulation and interstate relationships and Taoism believes that state regulation should be “natural,” i.e. a stabilised mode of production and demographics settled onto farmland; the relationship between states should be selfless, i.e., “neighbouring states should isolate themselves from each other forever” (Shi, 2014: 7). Professor Shi Ningzhong analogously argues that such a peace-loving individual must launch hatred of warfare; in other words, the longing for such a peaceful environment and life is “the pinnacle of antiwar position” (Shi, 2014: 7). Albeit in some ways the antiwar sentiments of Lao Tzu’s philosophy can be understandable, in a time when the powerful and the wealthy exploited the vulnerable, the notion of a little state with small demographics could singularly be inapplicable to that historical context of Spring and Autumn Period. Thus some believe that a state that is small at a territorial level and undeveloped and underprivileged at an economic level must be simultaneously weak and such a state is obviously inferior to a state which is both influential and affluent. Therefore in order to justify the view of “a little state with small demographics”, Lao Tzu had to expound two pairs of comparable Taoism-oriented dialectical antitheses: “existence and non-existence, being strong and being weak. Existence derives its existence from non-existence. In this sense, non-existence pre-exists existence” (Shi, 2014: 9).

Sequentially, in compliance with Taoism-based dialectics, the soft overcomes the hard, the weak the strong, which is viewed as a simple truth, but the authentic, objective world is of no such

simplistic substance or linear reasoning. If we attempt to define the pair of “the strong” and “the weak” and the pair of “the hard” and “the soft”, then it could be found that “the strong” cannot be called “strong”, unless it is superior to “the weak”; “the hard” cannot be called “hard”, unless it is more solid than “the soft”. Therefore, it can be logically deduced that the conclusion that the soft overcomes the hard, and the weak the strong is implausible and falsifiable (Shi, 2014). On the other hand, Professor Shi Ningzhong points out that in terms of the development and transformation of antithesis, “the strong” cannot invariably overcome “the weak” because under certain conditions, “the strong” and “the weak” may bear two-way transformative characteristics. Therefore, “the soft overcomes the hard, the weak the strong” may become theoretically the ultimate result based on theoretical reasoning (Shi, 2014). Therefore, it could be argued that *Tao Te Ching* does not demonstrate what the basis of the transformation of opposite is, nor does even describe the form of this dialectical thinking. Instead, it simply shows the intellectuals and scholars paradoxical words of truths to prove the possibility and validity of this dialectical thinking from the Taoist perspective (Shi, 2014), which indicates that it could be inductive methodology on a basis of intuition instead of logical reasoning and empiricism that Hegelianism and even Kantianism highlight.

Provided that School of Taoism is rediscovered beyond itself alone in a broadening sense from the social and philosophical perspectives, it is fair to observe that it is solely from the Spring and Autumn Period that ancient Chinese intellectual thoughts gradually acquired its unique fashion of discourse, which was mainly dependent upon intuitive and intellectual inspiration. This methodology and this way of expression profoundly have been profoundly affecting how modern Chinese intellectuals and scholars “grasp and address the problems which they encounter on a daily basis” (Shi, 2014: 9). However, taking its methodology into deep consideration, this intuitive way of interpreting conceptual thoughts is inapplicable in logical reasoning, since the basis of reasoning is conceptual judgement: “If the connotation and implication of the concept is not well-defined, then the judgement is impossible” (Shi, 2014: 9).

To put in briefly, the dialectical methodological merits from School of Taoism capture that people tend to use words which are limited to this existence to explain and present something which may be far beyond the existence. It could be argued that the *Way* is everything that exists and the reasons why everything exists. For instance, humans are born into the

natural world, Heaven and Earth, generating their own way. In a broader sense, social development and production oftentimes contradict with the dialectical essence of the Nature or the world, whose power of backlash may be infinite. Moreover, natural order is one of simplicity and one of generosity, which bears and captures a fundamental philosophical problem and underlying issue. Thus, it is crucially consequential for researchers, intellectuals and top decision makers to be conscious of the potential risk of anthropocentrism of putting human beings at the centre of everything and existence.

3. RECIPROCITY OF INTRINSIC, COMPARATIVE THEORETIC MERITS BETWEEN HEGELIANISM AND TAOISM FROM THE CONTEMPORARY PERSPECTIVES

3.1 Epistemological and Methodological Dissimilarities between School of Hegelianism and that of Taoism

Comparative speaking, classical Western philosophy is more about clarification of concepts, conceptual reasoning, and syllogism--the most sophisticated formal theoretical approaches in ancient times in particular, whilst the theoretical approaches that ancient Chinese intellectual schools tend to adopt are descriptive illustration and intuitive perception and induction (Shi, 2014); furthermore, in relative terms, it can be found that Western philosophy has to do more with intellectual persuasion whilst ancient Chinese intellectual schools and thoughts is intuitive enlightenment. In other words, traditional Western philosophy seeks to deepen understandings conceptually and scientifically whilst ancient Chinese philosophy seeks to artistically and aesthetically visualise the objectives (Shi, 2014). It is due to different social contexts and historical development trajectory that the epistemological and methodological dissimilarities and heterogeneity between School of Hegelianism and School of Taoism generate much controversy within the academia. School of Hegelianism emerged amid the epoch of post-Renaissance and Enlightenment Movement and even a wave of industrialisation that necessitate machinery and accuracy and organisation of means of production and of measurement. On the other hand, School of Taoism emerged amid the Spring and Autumn Period over the course of transition between the Palaeolithic Age and Neolithic Age when the usage of metallurgic technologies remained in an embryonic stage, which would require a kind of consistency and match between agricultural production and Nature. It is under that grand circumstance that explicit disparities between these two schools are ineluctably obvious:

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In the first place, from the perspective of the approaches to grasping the nature of the world, School of Hegelianism normally proposes mindful rational reasoning and mathematical inference in services of grasping the existence and subsistence of an authentic, objective world and mindful self-consciousness should be widespread useful. To the contrary, School of Taoism advocates intuitive perception and instinctive imagination in services of following the grand *Way* of Nature and it is extremely difficult to explain the real subsistence of the *Way* of Nature through explicit expressions of words and the cerebral system.

Furthermore, from the perspective of how to implement dialectical methodology, their approaches to utilising dialectical methodologies diverge: School of Hegelianism sticks to a unique triadic architecture and structure: thesis, antithesis and synthesis. That probably means that grasping an ontology from the world necessitates deconstructions and re-amalgamations of the compounds of substances. To the contrary, School of Taoism mainly sticks to the implications for ‘yin-yang’ nexus, which may be a kind of intrinsic value enshrined in the *Tai-Chi* diagram-relevant phenomenon, which means that the nature of the world merely comprises of *yin-yang* binary objects.

Last but not least, from the perspective of the relationship between nature and mindset, School of Hegelianism advocates critical importance and functionality of self-consciousness, and a supreme combination between absolute spirit and an objective world and knowledge and discovery into the world matters. Quite differently, School of Taoism proposes the critical role of *Way* and importance of way-abiding consistency between Humanity and Nature, and knowledge and forcefully making inappropriate, non-smooth changes in the world should be insignificant and counterproductive, contradicting with the grand *Way* (or *Dao*).

3.2. Reciprocal and Complementary Hegelianism-Taoism Nexus by the Grace of Dialectics-Generating Merits

Albeit in some ways the epistemology, methodologies and even ramifications between School of Hegelianism and School of Taoism to a certain degree diverge, there is no denying that some implicit nutritional components of their reciprocal and complementary conceptions and even notions can nourish productive, constructive merits, which may significantly outweigh their heterogeneity and discrepancy caused by the remarkable differences in socio-linguistic expressions, societal circumstances, and human development trajectory, especially

their theoretical contributions and findings to the dialectical epistemology and methodology as the theoretical groundwork.

To begin with, put on an axis of emphasising the critical importance of the role of dialectics in having access to the substance of the world, it could be observed that both School of Hegelianism and School of Taoism recognise and emphasise the ineluctable, indispensable role of dialectics, which bear binary characteristics behind social phenomenology, which helps the intellectuals, researchers and philosophers to abstractly extract merits and essence from the unknown, objective world. It is fair to say that neither of them may present and interpret the essence and subsistence of the existential world without dialectics, either from mindful spirit or intuitive perception.

Moreover, put on an axis of the role of spirit and Humanity-Nature consistency, it could be argued that the Hegelian supreme transformation of both subjective spirit and objective spirit into absolute spirit and the Taoism-generating notion that *Humanity* and *Nature* should be of that much maximum consistency could be intrinsically complementary and reciprocal for both *Nature* and Spirit bear the characteristics of reflexivity by substance.

4. EPIPHANY OF THEIR DIALECTICS-GENERATING MERITS CONCERNING HUMAN AND INTER-CIVILISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

4.1 Case Study of Unprecedented Climate Crisis and Crisis in Ecological Civilisation

As a result of profound analysis of School of Hegelianism and School of Taoism, especially their dialectical, methodological advancements and legacies, now is critically eventful to evaluate how they can be associated with international development issues, inter-civilisational issues, and human development issues. Prior to the organic combination between School of Hegelianism and School of Taoism, it is crucial to observe that the concept of ecological civilisation has expanded into a complex system consisting of diverse concepts. It could be emphasised that ecological civilisation can be believed to become part of a philosophy of green development and the indirect ramification of the overall development of civilisation (Ju, 2018).

Professor Shen Shuguang (1994) interprets ecological civilisation through the vertical history of human civilisations. Meanwhile there is a kind of disposition that ecological civilisation is another form of social civilisation after the

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primordial civilisation, agrarian civilisation and industrial civilisation, which “inherits and preserves the previous wealth passed down from the bygone agrarian civilisation and the still operating industrial civilisation” (Ju, 2018:19). In compliance with Shen Shuguang, the ecological crisis marks the built-in dwindling of the industrial civilisation, which is projected to be superseded by ecological civilisation becoming the cardinal pattern of future societies (Shen, 1994). To some extent, it could be argued that an evolving transformation from a modern mechanistic standpoint of understanding the nature to a more organic standpoint of nature by the grace of the development and advancement of modern science can be a kind of manifestation of profound transition from the conventional, one-dimensional pivot to industrial civilisation to the contemporary, multidimensional pivot to industrial civilisation and ecological civilisation, both of which are inseparable part of human civilisation. Moreover, ecological civilisation, if well-designed and well monitored, should draw on the advantageous ingredients over the course of determinedly abandoning disproportionately disadvantageous factors of unilaterally developing the agrarian civilisation and industrial civilisation, prioritising the ecological industrial sectors as the cardinal, consequential pillars, in services of solving most crises crippling the Mankind in pursuit of the stable, coordinated, and sustainable development among nature, society and economic development.

After bearing the cardinal importance of preserving ecological civilisation in mind, the researchers, intellectuals, environmentalists and even top policy makers should analyse the chief reasons for the unprecedented climate crisis. Climate change has become a potential conundrum continuing from the beginning of industrialisation to the 21st century, undermining the shared society in nearly all aspects (Mohideen et al., 2021). After much analysis of the implications and importance of ecological civilisations, it is crucial for researchers, intellectuals, decision makers, and environmental scientists to organically associate School of Taoism with that proposition that all the living creatures have their own qualities, which present the abundant environmental ethics, territorial ethics and social system ethics of School of Taoism natural philosophy from the perspective of ecological ethics. In terms of the observation that *Dao* derives from nature, individuals and groups have adequate empirical reasons to establish the coordination and unification of modern natural resource law, namely the scientific system, industrial system and institutional

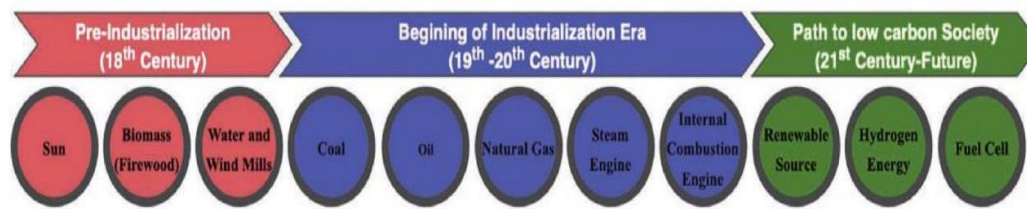
system in the ecological mechanism on the basis of natural philosophy so as to be “adapted to the epochal topic of economic globalisation and popularisation” (Lü, 2015: 316).

In what ways could the relevant people take advantage of the triadic dialectical epistemology and *yin-yang* dialectics to analyse the environmental situations on a micro level? The example of energy production system could be an exemplification of that. When it comes to the underlying energy system so far, it to a large degree is dependent upon fossil fuel, which was environmentally, socially, and economically unsustainable and uncoordinated (Mohideen et al., 2021). Sequentially, the anthropocentrism-causing, anthropogenic human activities destabilise the climate system by burning fossil fuels for the energy-related sectors releasing a large proportion of greenhouse gas emissions and poisonous emissions, including carbon dioxides and other toxic pollutants like particulate matter, engender climate change (Mohideen et al., 2021). Climate and environmental crises remain the potential challenges at the expense of human health, and the annual mortality rate (WHO, 2020). Thus, as the anthropogenically-disruptive human activities and environmental consumption of non-renewable energies significantly and disproportionately undermine the balance of ecosystem from the dialectical perspectives because Nature has its own *Way* of qualities.



Note. From “Figure: Illustration of the net-zero carbon targeted adopted countries,” by M.M. Mohideen et al., 2021, *Advancing Green Energy Solution with the Impetus of COVID-19 Pandemic*, 59, p.688. Copyright 2021 by the authors. Permission not sought.

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Note. From “Figure: Illustration of major historical time-line of human carbon energy transition,” by M.M. Mohideen et al., 2021, *Advancing Green Energy Solution with the Impetus of COVID-19 Pandemic*, 59, p. 691. Copyright 2021 by the authors. Permission not sought.

In what ways could School of Hegelianism and School of Taoism be collaboratively linked with the philosophical implications behind ecological civilisation? Taking the philosophical conceptions of ecological civilisation and the essence of *Way* into much full consideration, it is logical to deduce that urban industrialisation on the one hand historically has promoted a far more phenomenal economic growth than non-industrialisation progress, but on the other hand produced excruciating, lethal carbon emission and greenhouse gas emission that destroys environmental equilibrium and environmental ecosystem. As a consequence, this largely-anthropogenically-causing global warming desperately necessitates the researchers, intellectuals, and environmentalists to comprehensively figure out the new type of antithesis of a) why that occurs and of b) how that may not occur again under certain contexts and conditions and a synthetic solution that functions as a bridge between collaboration-oriented self-consciousness and mindset and a complex, objective world that should not be inhabitable if dialectical methodologies can be abstractly associated with applicable, collective policy implementation concerning a should-be better ecological development.

In a nutshell, taking the Hegelianism-and-Taoism-combined dialectical methodology and epistemology into account, in services of a long-term synthetic accomplishments in resolving the antithetical contradictions between part of deleterious human behaviour and ecosystem development (i.e. *Grand Way* in an authentic, objective world), it necessitates a sustainable, balanced, and green development strategy that will resolve environmental protection, public sanitation and facilitate environmental sustainability.

4.2 Dialectical Connotations and Lessons behind Case Study of Global Economic Crisis

Beyond the necessity of raising awareness of crisis in

ecological civilisation by the grace of School of Hegelianism and School of Taoism, the inherent, congenital contradictions behind the 2008 global economic and financial crisis could additionally be abstractly theorised and conceptualised in a context of dialectics from School of Hegelianism and School of Taoism.

Fairly speaking, it is unbiased to argue that global economic crisis starting from 2008 may be the phenomenological crisis of the global capitalistic production and capitalistic financial and economic system by substance. If we would like to launch our cognition of the subsistence of this global crisis on a maximum three-dimensional spatial level, then it could be theoretically argued that this global financial and economic crisis was not merely triggered by a single variable factor but by interwoven economic and political sources, thus producing a far more profound, spatial influence. The financial and economic crisis intertwined inextricably with the underlying imperfect, urgent global and security situation and exerted a significant, far-reaching influence on the latter one (Chen, 2009). In general, it is chiefly an indirect consequence of completely financial deregulation, fragmentary economic production system, and partial, incomplete, and non-synthetic analysis of a changing world situation.

In the first place, from the economic perspective, this global financial and economic crisis represented the chronically-neglected problematic characteristics of of neoliberal capitalism mechanism. Professor Chen Dongxiao from Shanghai Institute of International Studies argues that this global financial and economic crisis extensively manifested that the financial de-institutionalisation and de-regulation process advocated by certain western economic powers has seriously mismatched with major characteristics in the development of the financial and economic globalisation and the effective supervision and regulation over the workings of

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the financial system (Chen, 2009). As a result of that, the non-genuine development and expansion of financial derivatives and the absence of supervision in the US financial sector took a directly consistent toll on the outbreak of the global financial and economic crisis, causing worldwide investor panic and suspicion (Chen, 2009). In addition, it could be highlighted that the global financial and economic crisis may be the evolving consequence of sociocultural divisions and fragmentation. Professor Li Wei, from School of International Studies of Renmin University of China, argues that the domestic predicaments of the US mainly include gravely divided domestic politics, many grave financial difficulties and the disappearance of the traditional “melting pot” of inter-ethnic groups (Li, 2020). The social troubles confronted by the US on this day “are more severe and complicated than that of the 1960’s to the 1970’s” (Li, 2020: 79).

Furthermore, from the perspective of the butterfly effect from the means of production and economic globalisation, it is probable that the global financial and economic crisis should have been the preliminary severe non-equilibrium in global economic development and the irreversible but controversial, double-edged, binary economic globalisation. Since the phenomenal advancement of the globalisation in the vicissitude of a transformation from bipolar systems to multipolar systems, numerous developing economic powers and economic entities have become an inseparable part of the global production network, resulting in the exponential expansion of the global production network and potential production surplus. However, in the 21st century of deepening economic and financial globalisation, notwithstanding the immediate inflation of the virtual economy in Western economic powers temporarily covering the semblance of a fragile balance between the overall supply and demand, the balance might be vulnerable and susceptible and the problem concerning imbalanced surplus and deficit had been arising over the course of the development of the US non-industrial sectors (Chen, 2009).

Last but not least, from the perspective of politico-economic structure and institutional workings, the global financial and economic crisis was the exemplary consequence and ramification of structural contradictions between the globalising economic and financial workings and self-regulated economic workings made by different solitary economic powers of narrow national self-interests. On the one hand, the global market operation in the world economic system required continuous enhancing the demand for global resource

distribution and an corresponding capability for global economic administration; on the other hand, when it comes to the individual economic decision-making by solitary economic powers, a constellation of economic powers tend to unveil economic stimulus plans in accordance with their own national economic budgets, thus making it more difficult to adopt a coordinated stimulus package at a global level (Chen, 2009). That kind of circumstance further intensified the intrinsic antithetic contradiction between the global economic mechanism and the individual economic decision mechanism (Chen, 2009). Professor Chen Xiaodong from Shanghai Institute of International Studies is absolutely right that the obsolete faith in “market self-correction” and “responding to interference without cooperation with others” has been proven to be at a theoretical level completely ignorant of the transmission and the destructive power of the global economic crisis within the irreversible, grand background of economic globalisation (Chen, 2009).

Being subsequent to a series of qualitative analyses of root causes and subsistence of the global financial and economic crisis in a multidimensional, interdisciplinary fashion, it is genuinely reasonable to seek out possible solutions from the dialectical perspectives by the grace of Hegelian and Taoist merits. Judging from an alternative perspective, the inner driving forces of liberalisation and opening-up in the global economic system remain rampant and then most economic powers across the globe, within the exception of the United States, have all made noticeable, considerable progress on liberalisation (Li, 2020). In services of opting out of the global economic and financial crisis transcending borders, seeking common purposes against shared major contradictions of the financial and economic crisis turns out to be of that strategic significance. For instance, Professor Li Wei, from School of International Studies of Renmin University of China, points out that the EU and Japan jointly signed the Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement; the EU and UK signed the Free Trade Agreement; the CPTPP and RCEP were officially signed and the EU-China Comprehensive Investment Agreement (CAI) negotiation has culminated in an economic treaty (Li, 2020). Moreover, in the global economic governance system, the “3+1” architecture, i.e. the US, EU, China, plus Japan, which occupy 60% of the world economy, is gradually coming into existence as the US, the EU and China have become the world’s three economic juggernauts, which should adopt a strategic policy of multilateral interdependence and

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needed independent self-reliance (Li, 2020). It could be argued that economic collaboration and coordination among these three economic powers can make a far remarkable difference in seeking the root causes of global economic crisis and come up with collective but differentiated economic solutions. The should-be deepening synergistic partnership among the US Market, the EU Market and the China Market as a dialectical approach will put overwhelming pressure to the third side and reversely facilitate it to take corresponding policy measures and implementations, driving the structural transformation and or synthetic changes of global economic development system and political structures, which is an integral part of subsistence of world's changes.

Narrowing the global economic perspectives down to the Chinese economic perspectives, this paper argues that China as a major economic juggernaut may dialectically utilise a certain of principal advantages and beneficial conditions and circumstances in proactively participating in the leading global economic governance against synthetic economic and institutional challenges. For instance, as the singular economic power in the world profoundly boosting almost all industrial sectors and supply chains, the Chinese industrial added value remains the world's supreme pillar industries of all economic powers and thus rarely can potential refusal of the participation of Chinese economic power in a full swing be non-falsifiable. Moreover, one of the most consequential competitive advantage of Chinese economic power is by no means separate

from its *avant-garde* prowess of infrastructure construction. By the grace of phenomenal economic growth since Chinese economic engagement into the global economic system and workings, huge and efficient financial investment and remarkable technological progress, as well as the scale and quality of China's infrastructure development, are on a track of drastic acceleration, which played an important driving role in China's international economic cooperation (Li, 2020). That may be indicative of how China as an economic power is capable of seeking dialectical methodologies to resolving complex economic issues of antithetic contradiction and co-existence.

4.3 Philosophical Implications for Global COVID-19 Pandemic from the Dialectical Perspectives

A wave of unanticipated, yet-to-be-fully-investigated COVID-19 pandemic commenced in breaking out across the globe at the nearly end of 2019, whose pathogens and pathological root causes have not yet been thoroughly verifiable so far within the communities of immunologists, epidemiologists, ophthalmologists, medical and pharmaceutical professionals and so forth owing to insufficient, inadequate clinical experimentation and scientific observations. Thankfully, existential empirical studies have statistically revealed the general epidemiological findings, clinical manifestations, and clinical outcomes of COVID-19 patients (Wang et al, 2020; Chan et al, 2020; Lu et al, 2020; Huang et al, 2020; Chen et al, 2020; Yang et al., 2021).

Characteristics	Total	AKI	No AKI	Odds ratio	95%CI	P
No. of patients	287 (100.0)	55 (19.0)	232 (81.0)	-	-	-
Sex						
Male	160 (55.7)	38 (69.1)	122 (52.6)	1.0 (ref.)	-	-
Female	127 (44.3)	17 (30.9)	110 (47.4)	0.50	0.27-0.93	0.03
Age [year, median (IQR)]	62 (51-70)	66 (57-74)	60 (49-69)	1.03	1.01-1.05	0.01
Weight (kg, Mean±SD)	64.2±11.7	68.1±9.3	63.0±12.1	1.04	0.99-1.10	0.16
Body mass index (Mean±SD)	23.6±3.3	24.2±2.4	23.4±3.5	1.08	0.90-1.29	0.43
Pre-existing comorbidities						
Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease	16 (6.0)	6 (11.0)	10 (4.0)	2.72	0.94-7.83	0.06
Chronic renal insufficiency	5 (2.0)	3 (5.0)	2 (1.0)	6.64	1.08-40.72	0.04
Cardiovascular disease	33 (12.0)	10 (18.0)	23 (10.0)	2.02	0.90-4.54	0.08
Hypertension	87 (30.0)	23 (42.0)	64 (28.0)	1.89	1.03-3.47	0.04
Diabetes mellitus	45 (16.0)	12 (22)	33 (14.0)	1.68	0.80-3.52	0.16
Cerebrovascular disease	23 (8.0)	9 (16.0)	14 (6.0)	3.05	1.24-7.46	0.02
Chronic liver disease	10 (4.0)	1 (2.0)	9 (4.0)	0.46	0.06-3.70	0.73
Cancer	8 (3.0)	3 (5.0)	5 (2.0)	2.62	0.61-11.31	0.38
Onset to admission time [day, median (IQR)]	10 (6-14)	10 (6-14)	9 (5-13)	1.02	0.97-1.07	0.54
Signs and symptoms						
Fever	223 (78.0)	40 (73.0)	183 (79.0)	0.71	0.37-1.40	0.32
Cough	209 (73.0)	41 (75.0)	168 (72.0)	1.17	0.57-2.18	0.75
Dyspnea	139 (48.0)	29 (53.0)	110 (47.0)	1.24	0.69-2.23	0.48
Myalgia or fatigue	137 (48.0)	25 (45.0)	112 (48.0)	0.89	0.50-1.61	0.71
Other symptoms ¹	138 (48.0)	24 (44.0)	114 (49.0)	0.80	0.44-1.45	0.46
Hypoxia ²	99 (35.0)	27 (49.0)	72 (31.0)	2.14	1.18-3.89	0.01
Tachypnea ³	21 (7.0)	10 (18.0)	11 (5.0)	4.47	1.79-11.14	0.01
Family cluster	23 (8.0)	3 (6.0)	20 (9.0)	0.61	0.18-2.14	0.62
Disease severity ⁴						
Non-severe	163 (57.0)	21 (38.0)	142 (61.0)	1.00 (ref.)	-	-
Severe	124 (43.0)	34 (62.0)	90 (39.0)	2.54	1.40-4.68	0.01
PCR result						
Negative	131 (45.6)	25 (45.5)	106 (45.7)	1.0 (ref.)	-	-
Positive	156 (54.4)	30 (54.5)	126 (54.3)	1.01	0.56-1.82	0.98

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Note. From “Characteristics of COVID-19 patients on admission according to acute kidney injury status,” by G.H.Xiao et al., 2021, *Acute Kidney Injury in Patients Hospitalized with COVID-19 in Wuhan, China: a Single-Center Retrospective Observational Study*, 41, p.159. Copyright 2021 by the authors. Permission not sought.

Parameter	Normal range	Total (n=287)	AKI (n=55)	No AKI (n=232)	P
White blood cell count (×10 ⁹ /L)	4.0-10.0	5.0 (3.8-7.2)	5.8 (4.3-9.5)	4.9 (3.6-6.7)	<0.01
<4 [n(%)]	-	129 (45)	9 (16)	120 (52)	
4-10 [n(%)]	-	131 (46)	34 (62)	97 (42)	<0.01
>10 [n(%)]	-	27 (9)	12 (22)	15 (6)	
Neutrophil count (×10 ⁹ /L)	1.8-6.3	3.6 (2.3-5.5)	4.5 (3.0-8.5)	3.4 (2.2-5.1)	<0.01
Lymphocyte count (×10 ⁹ /L)	1.1-3.2	0.8 (0.6-1.2)	0.7 (0.4-1.0)	0.9 (0.6-1.2)	<0.01
Hemoglobin (g/L, Mean±SD)	120-150	128.3±17.1	125±20.0	129.1±16.3	0.11
Prothrombin time (s, Mean±SD)	11.0-16.0	15.3±5.8	17.1±11.7	14.9±2.8	0.11
Activated partial thromboplastin time (s, Mean±SD)	27.0-45.0	35.8±7.3	37.7±10.5	35.4±6.3	0.05
D-dimer (mg/mL)	0.0-0.5	0.6 (0.2-2.0)	0.9 (0.2-6.6)	0.5 (0.2-1.6)	<0.01
Alanine aminotransferase (U/L)	0-40	25 (17-38)	27 (18-43)	24 (16-37)	0.18
Aspartate aminotransferase (U/L)	0-40	27 (20-41)	35 (23-50)	26 (19-40)	<0.01
Total bilirubin (μmol/L)	3.4-20.5	8.9 (6.6-12.0)	11.0 (8.1-16.0)	8.6 (6.3-11.38)	<0.01
Albumin (g/L, Mean±SD)	34.0-54.0	33.4±4.8	31.6±5.6	33.8±4.5	<0.01
Creatine kinase (U/L)	30.0-310.0	100.0 (58.0-172.0)	118.0 (69.0-223.0)	99.0 (51.25-154.0)	0.03
Lactate dehydrogenase (U/L)	120-150	255 (188-359)	344 (234-469)	238 (183-333)	<0.01
Glucose >11.1 mmol/L [n(%)]	3.9-6.1	44 (15.0)	12 (22.0)	32 (14.0)	0.14
Procalcitonin (ng/mL)	<0.05	0.07 (0.05-0.16)	0.15 (0.09-0.41)	0.07 (0.04-0.13)	<0.01
C-reactive protein (mg/L)	≤5.0	23.4 (4.1-38.0)	34.6 (10.6-71.7)	19.5 (4.0-37.0)	0.02
Hyperkalemia (>5.0 mmol/L) [n(%)]	≤5	22 (8.0)	10 (18.0)	12 (5.0)	<0.01
Other respiratory pathogens [n(%)]	NA	4 (1.0)	0 (0.0)	4 (2.0)	>0.99
CT score ²	NA	7 (5-12)	9 (6-15)	7 (5-11)	<0.01

Note. From “Laboratory results of COVID-19 patients on admission according to acute kidney injury status,” by G.H.Xiao et al., 2021, *Acute Kidney Injury in Patients Hospitalized with COVID-19 in Wuhan, China: a Single-Center Retrospective Observational Study*, 41, p.160. Copyright 2021 by the authors. Permission not sought.

In addition to the eminent threat to public sanitation, COVID-19 negatively exacerbates the poverty relief and alleviation. Statistically speaking, for certain rural areas within the Chinese territory, in the middle of February, 2020, nearly 23% of the households having lifted out of extreme poverty since 2013 perceived of the probability of falling back into high Engel’s co-efficient owing to the COVID-19 pandemic (Luo, 2020). “Among those households who were not in poverty, 7.1% perceived that they would probably suffer from poverty owing to the pandemic” (Luo, 2020: 2946). A series of following

results from multivariate analyses consistently manifest that the obstructions that the pandemic caused in off-farm employment is an ineluctable channel that stifled the households perceiving of falling back into or falling into the trap of higher Engel’s co-efficient. It can be argued that the global COVID-19 pandemic has been proved to be taking a far consistent toll on agricultural and rural development which could have been lifted out of poverty line.

Variables	All sample	Poverty graduates	Never poor	Remaining poor	P-value
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	H0: (2)=(3)=(4) (5)
A. Exposure to the COVID-19 shock					
(1) Any suspected or confirmed cases in your village (1=yes, 0=no)	0.07	0.04	0.07	0.07	0.41
(2) Hubei Province (1=yes, 0=no)	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.04	0.50
B. Interruption in off-farm employment					
(3) Any family member has returned to off-farm work by February 12, 2020 (1=yes, 0=no)	0.17	0.11	0.18	0.13	0.06
(4) Village average of households’ proportion of labors with the following joint status of off-farm employment by January 19 in lunar calendar					
(4a) No in 2019, No in 2020	0.09	0.09	0.09	0.07	0.82
(4b) Yes in 2019, No in 2020	0.44	0.45	0.44	0.25	0.02
(4c) Yes/No in 2019, Yes in 2020	0.13	0.08	0.13	0.09	0.43
(5) Households’ proportion of labors’ off-farm employment location in 2019					
(5a) Outside the county but within his/her home province (1=yes, 0=no)	0.13	0.10	0.14	0.14	0.39
(5b) Outside his/her home province (1=yes, 0=no)	0.14	0.16	0.14	0.06	0.21
C. Quintiles of household income per capita in 2019					
(6a) Poorest quintile (1=yes, 0=no)	0.19	0.31	0.17	0.35	0.00
(6b) Second quintile (1=yes, 0=no)	0.21	0.26	0.20	0.41	0.00
(6c) Third quintile (1=yes, 0=no)	0.23	0.22	0.23	0.11	0.14
(6d) Fourth quintile (1=yes, 0=no)	0.18	0.13	0.18	0.09	0.06
(6e) Richest quintile (1=yes, 0=no)	0.20	0.08	0.21	0.04	0.00
D. Produced and sold the following products in 2019					
(7) Fresh fruits	0.07	0.08	0.07	0.02	0.38
(8) Vegetables	0.06	0.07	0.04	0.76	0.76
(9) Pigs	0.05	0.06	0.05	0.07	0.62
E. Other characteristics					
(10) Household head got at least junior high school education (1=yes, 0=no)	0.40	0.32	0.42	0.22	0.00
(11) Age of household head (years)	59.4	54.8	59.9	60.4	0.08
(12) Area of arable land (mu) ¹⁾	9.40	4.09	10.13	3.77	0.31
Number of observations	1733	161	1526	46	-

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Note. From “Statistics of Variables for Measurements of Poverty Rate,” by R.F.Luo et al., 2020, *Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Rural Poverty and Policy Responses in China, 19*, p. 2950. Copyright 2020 by the authors. Permission not sought.

Provinces of China	The proportion of households ever identified as poor between 2013 and 2019		Poverty incidence in December 2019	
	Household-level (1)	Individual-level (2)	Household-level (3)	Individual-level (4)
All sample	11.9	11.5	2.7	1.8
Sichuan	16.8	15.6	4.3	1.8
Guangdong	8.8	8.8	2.0	1.0
Jiangxi	15.0	14.4	2.6	2.0
Hebei	11.5	8.9	3.8	3.2
Zhejiang	7.0	7.3	2.2	1.8
Hubei	10.6	9.4	1.2	0.8
Liaoning	8.1	8.3	2.8	2.8
Shaanxi	12.4	11.4	2.3	1.7
Rural China		8.5		0.6

Note. From “Poverty Incidence at Different Levels (%)” by R.F. Luo et al., 2020, *Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Rural Poverty and Policy Responses in China, 19*, p. 2951. Copyright 2020 by the authors. Permission not sought.

Being subsequent to much multidimensional analysis of the Global COVID-19 pandemic in a dialectical way, it is absolutely understandable that “the emergence of COVID-19 epidemic was declared by the World Health Organisation as a Public Health Emergency of International Concern on 30 January, 2020 and a pandemic on 11 March, 2020” (Feng et al. 2020: 1964). This lethal, life-threatening COVID-19 has been posing an eminent, catastrophic threat to international development, inter-civilisational development and human security development. The enormous influence of the global COVID-19 pandemic has exponentially targeted all manners of real economies and industries penetrating every corner of the globe because of the profound inter-dependence of all economic powers across which COVID-19 and its variants, either Delta variant or Omicron variant, transmit and transcend at the phenomenal replication rate under multiple statistical research. Quantitatively speaking, among affected economic powers and civilisational entities, over 1000 confirmed cases have been reported in 179 of those economic powers and civilisational entities, over 10,000 cases in 109, over 100,000 cases in 42 (Feng et al. 2020). With the exception of the positive economic growth rate in the China Market due to well-organised, well-institutionalised pandemic-controlling measures, the economic growth rate of the North America, Europe, Southeastern Asia, Africa and numerous alternative economic powers has significantly dwindled, followed by the upward trajectory of the unemployment rate and external economic downward pressure. It could be argued or even estimated that this global public health crisis reversely puts the world economy once again at a far more disadvantageous position, exacerbating global confidence volatility in trade and investment and increasing the fluctuation rate in interstate

consumption rate and purchasing powers and then the global economy may be on the phase of potential double-dip recession much in a different but comparable way that the 2008 global economic crisis emerged and may present a U-shaped economic pattern.

Therefore, it is high time that most doctors, medical scientists, pharmaceutical professionals and epidemiologists should have figured out the potential essence and pathogenic, pathological substance of COVID-19 as well as its variants, making sure of minimising the exponential replication rate in so far as the global COVID-19 pandemic has imposed huge challenges on public sanitation, standard and condition of living, social production and socioeconomic development as well as social order and international architectures (Ding et al., 2020a; Tian et al., 2020). Furthermore, provided that dialectical methodology can be implemented in services of trying to seek the substance and come up with effective solutions, this Hegelian triadic structure of thesis, antithesis and synthesis can be a category of theoretical framework and Taoism-proposing *Way* can furnish our researchers, pharmaceutical professionals, medical professional, and doctors and scientists with intuitive inspiration that production should be Nature-abiding as required albeit the issue pertaining to the global COVID-19 pandemic is a matter of science by substance, which necessitates maximum clinical experimentation, empirical, positivistic analysis and collaborative trans-disciplinary research. The dialectical methodological analysis can be abstractly conducted as follows:

To begin with, from the perspective of gaining an epiphany of grand way of the nature and the world, similar to the comparable cause of unprecedented climate crisis, which

engenders crisis of ecological civilisations, if there is an inconsistency between a well-organised, well-disciplined lifestyle and the natural, smooth development of an objective Nature, then such a non-equilibrium is highly likely cause negative repercussions and ramifications that may pose a counterweight to over-consumption, unscientific production, and non-salubrious sanitation awareness and lifestyle, theoretically speaking. For instance, from the perspective of the nexus between energy production and the global COVID-19 pandemic, the global energy system necessitates a revolutionary transition from today’s fossil-fuel-based means of production to a low-carbon-based energy production system by launching and promoting abyssal carbonisation in all energy sectors (Mohideen et al., 2021). Besides the situation above, the widespread COVID-19 pandemic has devastated the global economy and “ramps down the future of fossil fuel, which provides opportunities to rethink and reshape the energy system to a low carbon footprint” (Mohideen et al., 2021: 688). In other words, the global COVID-19 pandemic reversely launches an thoughtful, conceptual influence upon the necessary reduction in carbon emissions.

Moreover, this unanticipated public health crisis of international concerns furnishes the Humanity with another kind of thought-provoking inspiration that human nature and human civilisations should be and must be seriously and meticulously honoured and respected with profound reference, partly because those two ontological subject matters are also indistinguishable from a potential grand Way of nature, which comprises of yin and yang from the Taoist perspective, and from mindful spirit, or *Geist*, which comprises of the gradual evolution and cyclical iteration of thesis, antithesis and synthesis from the Hegelian perspective. At a technical level, whilst the global COVID-19 pandemic unknowingly sweeps across every corner of the globe, it remains critically significant that numerous epidemiologists, immunologists, medical professionals and doctors should collectively seek out the pathogenic subsistence of COVID-19 and figure out effective medical and clinical solutions of international humanitarianism as a result of multiple clinical expression and empirical observation. Scientific assessment of the spatio-temporal transmission characteristics, development dynamics and actual processes of COVID-19 as well maximum accurate understandings of major risk factors has practical, pragmatic implications for facilitating international, inter-civilisational, even humanitarian cooperation to monitor and control the

pandemic.

5. CONCLUSION

In a nutshell, it is confessing to observe that neither School of Hegelianism nor School of Taoism can directly provide the individuals and groups with concrete applied methods to resolve underlying issues, nor can accurately prognosticate and monitor the unpredictable occurrence and movement of trajectory of those underlying issues and human development problems, socioeconomically, environmentally and sanitarly. There will be no absolute accuracy in analysis and prediction of inter-civilisational trajectory and occurrence of human development affairs, e.g. the unprecedented climate crisis, the crisis in ecological civilisation, global economic and financial regulation deficiency, imperfect governance, and unanticipated global COVID-19 pandemic, and so forth, from the divergent concrete dialectical methodologies of School of Taoism and School of Hegelianism alone; the former one tends to be vividly and intuitively dialectical based on the unification of the opposite; the latter one tends to be empirically dialectical on a basis of logical reasoning and empirical investigation into real existence and objects. However, it is not superfluous to conclude that both teachings and doctrines from School of Hegelianism and School of Taoism provide an inspirational, indispensable theoretical guideline and a philosophical connotation to seeking a fruitful, instrumental approach to genuinely resolving the issues concerning international development, inter-civilisational development and human security development. Notwithstanding their divergent social contexts and circumstances, and diversified means of social production that generate different worldviews and consciousness and understandings of the ontological existence of an objective world, their reciprocal philosophical and theoretical contributions and breakthroughs in dialectics-based epistemology and methodology far outweigh the above-mentioned disparities. In other words, their theoretical contributions to dialectics to a large degree nourish the epistemological and methodological breakthroughs in the upcoming, prospective ways in front of underlying issues that confront international, inter-civilisational, and human development phenomenology and also the intrinsic root causes instead of symptoms alone.

By the grace of intellectual merits of dialectical advancements and teachings from School of Hegelianism and School of Taoism, there is no empirical reason for not holding deep faith

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that both *Tao* and *Spirit* in their respective, differentiated senses are indistinguishable from the existence of an authentic, complex world, which is hard to be accurately explained in words alone but rather than maximum self-consciousness of that latter and even mindful sublimation of getting closer to it through both intuitive perception and logical, rational inference. There is also no reason for not holding deep faith that international, inter-civilisational and human development issues should be thoroughly resolved neither through the means of metaphysical linear thinking mode nor through the ways of intuitive conceptions that bear little mathematical, pure-logic-based inference and deduction, but rather through a category of encyclopaedic, updated dialectical framework and cross-civilisational philosophy that can to a large degree help to generate long-term valid prescription drugs, figuratively speaking.

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