



RESEARCH ARTICLE

COMPARATIVE INTER-CIVILISATIONAL FORMULAS FROM SCHOOL OF PLATONISM AND SCHOOL OF CONFUCIANISM: INTER-CIVILISATIONAL THEORISATION OF INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT ISSUES FROM INTER-PHILOSOPHICAL PERSPECTIVES

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ABSTRACT

This manuscript attempts to comparatively decipher the acroamatic substances from Platonism and Confucianism, followed by amalgamation of their intrinsic reciprocity and heterogeneity, and then seeks to theorise international development issues that may be theoretically addressed on the grounds of both international relations theory and theoretical merits of Platonism and Confucianism. Both Platonism and Confucianism, which could be the indirect philosophical ramifications of a set of colloquies among myriad magnificent interlocutors within their respective historical periods, unveil substantial influences upon, and significant implications for, the Occidental Civilisation and Chinese Civilisation, ranging from epistemological interpretations of power, justice, knowledge and even governance systems. It is fair to argue that those intellectual notions from Platonism and Confucianism generate indelible merits and understandable blemishes owing to the historical circumstances, socioeconomic development, and technological advancement in a far more embryonic stage. If both can be put on an axis of international studies theory, their legacies, whose significance might outweigh their ideational blemishes, can function as the alternative theoretical guidelines to international human development issues. To evaluate the applicability and their merits on an axis of international studies, this manuscript conducts comparative studies of global poverty alleviation with the Platonic-and-Confucian-generating spirit of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, of climate catastrophe and COVID-19, and ultimately seeks to dialectically reconfigures the ideational interplay of Platonism and Confucianism with international studies, which generates formulas. Based on multiple research, it could be so far concluded and expected that irrespective of their legacies and limitations, it literally behooves analysts and connoisseurs in international studies to multidimensionally cogitate and reactivate their intellectual conceptions, especially part of constructive epistemological substances that might remain theoretically applicable to maximum inter-territorial exchanges of divergent civilisations and seeking a normative theoretical formula of addressing global development issues in a shared 21st century.

INTRODUCTION

Both ancient Greek Civilisation and Han Chinese Civilisation had been making far-reaching impacts upon development trajectory of human civilisation in divergent fashions, both of which have already internalised magnificent civilisational treasures that emerged in historical societies of divisions and chaos, unification and fragmentation thousands of years ago, which have borne high bearings upon constant discovery of definitions of knowledge, power, justice, virtue and so forth. It could be observed that Platonism and Confucianism, which could be the indirect intellectual ramifications of a succession of thought-provoking colloquies among historically-magnificent interlocutors (e.g. Socrates, Thrasymachus, Glaucon, Adeimantus, Polemarchus, Confucius, Mencius, etc.) within their corresponding historical periods, exert a substantial leverage over Occidental Civilisation and Han

Chinese Civilisation, ranging from epistemological definitions and interpretations of justice to those of knowledge, morality, governance and so forth. It is fair to highlight that those significant intellectual notions and dispositions from both Platonism and Confucianism figuratively generate indelible intellectual merits and ideational formulas, as well as a proportion of understandable theoretical blemishes owing to the inevitably preliminary historical circumstances, socioeconomic development, comparative geographic competitive disadvantages, and technological advancement in a far more embryonic, inchoate historical stage. Optimistically speaking, provided that both Platonism and Confucianism can be put on a theoretic axis of international studies, which was, comparatively speaking, rarely was done in the past, their corresponding philosophical legacies both from ancient Greek Civilisation and Han Chinese Civilisation, whose philosophical significance might outweigh their historical blemishes, can function as the alternative theoretical frameworks and

guidelines to be applied in the realm of international affairs and global human development issues beyond a context of philosophical discourse alone. Therefore, regardless their philosophical legacies and limitations, theoretically speaking, it behooves philosophers and connoisseurs in international affairs to in a dialectical, multidimensional and interdisciplinary fashion cogitate and abstractly reactivate those intellectual conceptions, especially part of salubrious, constructive epistemological substances that might remain theoretically applicable to the shared grand mission of maximum interstate, inter-territorial exchanges of divergent civilisations and the should-be accomplishments of seeking a normative theoretical formula of philosophically conceptualising, theorising and reconfiguring comparable international, global human development issues, ranging from sociopolitical and socioeconomic significance of necessary global poverty alleviation under the international framework of the UN Sustainable Development Goals, mitigating the unprecedented global climate catastrophe, and ultimately eradicating the unanticipated sweeping global COVID-19 pandemic within an international arena, in a more intertwined 21st century of economic and technological globalisation and asymptotically theoretical convergence of divergent interests.

Out of curiosity of synthesising a potential ideational bridge between Platonism and Confucianism, this research paper seeks to critically discover the following hypothetical questions. To begin with, it is needed to discover the question of in what ways should their intellectual epistemologies and methodologies, which were both noticeable over 2000 years ago, be in an abstract, dialectical fashion inherited. Second, after quantitatively identifying their corresponding inherited merits and legacies and certain ideational limitations, it is desirable to evaluate whether there might be any similarity, reciprocity or heterogeneity between Platonism and Confucianism in terms of epistemology, methodology and ontological experimentation of an objective world notwithstanding their differences in geographical origin, historical context and other crucial reasons. Last but not least, from the perspective of the theory-application-evaluation triangular nexus, it is quintessential to extrapolate another hypothetical question of what categories of significant intellectual implications remain philosophically applicable and constructive to the grand mission of dialectically conceptualising, theorising and reconfiguring certain underlying functional international development issues and rebuilding a more normative international order in services of ameliorating global human development in a more inextricably-intertwined 21st century of structural integration and fragmentation, of discipline, laws and unpredictability. It is fair to be sober that there would be no immediate neat methodology that can engender immediate, short-term ramifications. Instead, by the virtue of inter-philosophical amalgamation between Platonism and Confucianism and international development affairs, a series of precise, comprehensive frameworks, which are highly likely to generate long-term, sustainable results in the realm of international development studies, should be meticulously adopted. Well-organised epistemology can be deterministic of corresponding methodologies. This research manuscript intends to commence with comparative analysis of both Platonism and Confucianism from the inter-philosophical perspectives, which serves to philosophically reconfigure and evaluate the structural functionality and imperfectability within their philosophical notions.

Additionally, an organic combination between a) case studies of functional international development issues and b) Platonism and Confucianism as part of theoretical guidelines is analytically implemented. The case study of global poverty alleviation is in line with applicability evaluation of governance and benchmark of justice from the consequentialist and appropriateness-evaluating perspectives for which School of Platonism and School of Confucianism advocate at a generic level. Another comparable case study of the unprecedented global meteorological disaster also seeks to argue for Platonic out-of-cave mode of thinking to substantively identify the root causes, rather than phenomenological symptoms, of such global climate crisis because climate change is rarely a matter of natural science alone but rather, more crucially, the anthropogenically-causing repercussions from a philosophical perspective in a context of international social science, which necessitate zero zero-sum-game mentality from classical realism theory covering Machiavellianism. Finally, the comparable case study of the COVID-19 pandemic tends to bridge a necessary Platonic out-of-cave mode of thinking with changes in international structure, and questions of governmentality and applicability. The content of this research paper is structurally compartmentalised into several parts as follows. The first part comparatively philosophically and conceptually identifies certain merits from a) the Platonic inspirations in Philosophers-dominant governance system for an ideal world as it should be instead of an authentic, objective world as it is, and those from Confucianism's constructive intellectual notions, such as prevalence of public spirit for grand course. Then, this research paper undertakes comparative analysis of their validity, functionality and even imperfectability due to historical backgrounds and circumstances as the limited, restrictive extraneous features. This research paper attempts to take advantage of critical cases to instantiate and exemplify their potential, ideational relationships in terms of both legacies and theoretical limitations. The next parts intend to compartmentalise their epistemological and methodological disparities or potential similarities and certain intellectual legacies. The successive sections attempt to conduct profound quantitative and qualitative evaluations to the applicability of those encyclopaedic notions and concepts associated with the tasks of dialectically conceptualising, theorising and reconfiguring international development issues and of rebuilding a more normative international order in services of enhancement of international, inter-civilisational human development to this day and in the future. Major cases, especially including a more fair and effective governance mechanism of global poverty alleviation formulas, which can be the foundation of politico-economic development in a sense of justice that Socrates, Thrasymachus, Glaucon, Polemarchus and Cephalus discussed from *The Republic* (2007), and a more representative, effective, and professionally collaborative intellectual formula of mitigating the unprecedentedly anthropogenically-causing meteorological crisis, and a more efficient, effective governance mechanism of public sanitation in avoidance of public health crisis of international concerns such as COVID-19 pandemic, will be analytically cogitated in a multidimensional fashion in relations to the philosophical merits of Platonism and Confucianism from the inter-philosophical, inter-civilisational perspectives. Last but not least, it is fair to present that those inter-philosophical, inter-civilisational discussions associated with international studies can be of more significance and implications at a theoretical, ideational level than at a pragmatic, applicable level.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Both School of Platonism and School of Confucianism, which could be the indirect products of successive intellectual, philosophical colloquies among magnificent interlocutors within their respectively corresponding historical periods, had been making phenomenal influences upon Occidental Civilisation and Chinese Civilisation, ranging from epistemological definitions of virtues, power, knowledge, justice, and even governance system and so forth. It is fair to argue that those significant conceptual, intellectual notions and concepts from both School of Platonism and School of Confucianism generate crucial merits of both historical significance and modern significance, as well as certain understandable blemishes and drawbacks owing to the historical circumstances, socioeconomic development, and technological development on a far more preliminary phase in comparison with those of today's world. Irrespective of their genuine philosophical legacies and controversial intrinsic theoretical limitations, it behooves philosophical analysts, social scientists and connoisseurs in international affairs to abstractly cogitate and dialectically inherit those intellectual, philosophical conceptions, especially part of those productive, constructive epistemological substances that might remain applicable to the shared task of maximum exchanges of civilisations and of seeking a normative theoretical formula of philosophically addressing comparable individual development and global development issues in the 21st century.

Expansion of Microcosm into Macrocosm of Platonic Philosophy from Hermeneutic Perspectives: In order to profoundly apprehend a proportion of advantageous, productive epistemological and methodological substances of School of Platonism, that necessitates a deepening acquaintance and cognizance of Plato's *The Republic* (2007), which is widely acknowledged as one of the most consequential, influential philosophical works throughout the intellectual chronicle. Presented in the form of a range of thought-provoking colloquies between Socrates and other history-making interlocutors, e.g. Thrasymachus, Glaucon, Adeimantus, Polemarchus, Cephalus, and so forth, this historically-important philosophical masterpiece, which could be epitomised as part of the product of city-state democratic workings in ancient Greek period, extrapolates acroamatic inquiry into the collective, synergistic notions of a perfect community and the ideal individual. Plato's *Republic* is arguably the greatest achievement in Greek Philosophy and it is also one of the greatest achievements in ancient Greek and even Western literature. It is surely the high point of ancient political tradition and, naturally enough, the high point of School of Platonism as well. Within *Republic*, Plato raises the issues of dialectics between power and knowledge: those who hold power do not acquire profound knowledge of real truths and authentic statements. However, the philosophers who bear profound political knowledge are subjected to the many. Thus, such an imbalance and a non-equilibrium between power and knowledge is intertwined with interaction between force and persuasion. Therefore, by the virtue of philosophical lucidity and inspirational allegory, School of Platonism advocates for an organic amalgamation of a diversification of states under a should-be meritocratic rule of philosopher kings, who, theoretically speaking, bear profound political and philosophical knowledge of how to well build and manage an authentic society as well as an authentic world. Within *The Republic*, a metaphorical allegory of the Cave can be

epitomised as one of supreme spotlights of School of Platonism. This is a philosophical story about people's ascendance from blindness to wisdom, whose significance depends upon its emphasis on the discrepancy between the educated individuals and the uneducated ones (Wang 2011). Professor Wang Yi from Metropolitan College of Wenzhou University argues that the essential understandings from this philosophical allegory captures the one-dimensional phenomenon that the prisoners within are by no means seeing an authentic reality, but singularly a shadowy representation of the authentic world (Wang 2011). The prisoners would tend to be erroneous in identifying appearance for reality and assume that the objects they witness on the wall, i.e. the shadows, are authentic without knowing about any scientific substance behind the shadows (Wang 2011). The conceptual and philosophical significance of such an allegorical story is indistinguishable from Plato's proposition that there are invisible truths and substance under the apparent surface of things that can be meticulously apprehended by the most enlightened only (Wang 2011). Likewise, in compliance with Plato's renowned theory of *idea* and *appearance*, truth is within *idea* or *form*, rather than in the world of *appearance*, which is frequent result of sensory experience (Chiang 2020).

This philosophically-important example could fundamentally be an instantiation and exemplification of Plato's intellectual apperception and epistemological and even metaphysical definition of the natural world. Professor Wang Yi argues that from the perspectives of human sense and reason, in compliance with Plato's ideational theory, the world can be compartmentalised into "the world of ontoson" and "the world of poson" (Wang 2011: 11). The former one may correspond to individuals' hallucinations and conceptions, including the images and natural objects in the existing world, and something inside of Plato's comparable, hypothetical *Cave* is a symbol of the world of ontoson, whereas the latter one comparatively corresponds to rational knowledge and authentic virtue of the natural world, and the counterpart outside of Plato's cave is a figurative representation of the world of poson (Wang 2011). On a basis of this philosophical conceptions, it could be observed that the possession of a few, small-scale, true belief may characterise the scenario of all (Wang 2011). People may lack a systematic, rational explanation of them without certain ground-making theoretical frameworks. In other words, there is invariably difference between people's intellectual cognizance of objects and the objects of the world of much authenticity. Similarly, Professor Wang Yi highlights that the people have actually assorted true beliefs about "what is", but an erroneous conceptualisation of "why it occurs that way", which is the shared virtue of the authentic world (Wang 2011). By the virtue of Professor Wang Yi re-depicting Plato's allegory of the Sun and the Cave, the prisoners can see the image alone cast on the screen by the light of the fire (Wang 2011). The two images of the fire inside the cave and the sun outside the cave generate their own profound, corresponding implications (Wang 2011). In compliance with School of Platonism, only when much rational, reasonable knowledge of the *form-ness* of a natural thing is borne can the individuals possess and theorise a comprehensive account of its comparable substance, and authenticity (Wang 2011). In other words, grasping the form of the object may be the fundamentally sufficient prerequisite to grasping real, genuine knowledge of a concrete object (Wang 2011). However, in accordance with School of Platonism, knowing the form of an object is merely a preliminary precondition to acquiring

ultimate understandings of an natural object; a form of the virtue should thus be recognised as well (Wang 2011). It could be argued that the Sun-relevant metaphor literally reveals a special representation of, and the distinctive significance of, the form of the good itself because the Sun as an instrumental metaphor furnishes the Humanity with the strengths and powers to identify the authentic world. (Wang 2011). The allegory of School of Platonism comports with Platonic categorical emphasis over soul, and the soul in Platonic sense consists of three basic energies: Reason, Emotion, and Appetite: Reason is of the greatest value, while Emotion and especially Appetite are regarded as the “lower passions”; the soul that is ordered is governed by Reason, and manipulates one’s emotions and appetites (Wang 2011). For instance, provided that the enlightened prisoner chooses to stay in the cave instead of struggling to get rid of the cave, this individual will surely be the singularly free man who is best equipped to control the rest of the prisoners within (Wang 2011). Regardless, Platonic Allegory of the Cave philosophically informs the analysts, intellectuals, philosophers, and social scientists that the human beings could be analogous to the kinds of prisoners in a tangible world, which can be analogous to the cave. Just as the freed prisoner ascends into the light of the Sun, so is the case that individuals accumulate knowledge and ascend into the realm of the truth and the reality (Wang 2011). This kind of philosophical allegory indirectly indicates that a range of people who come to recognise and define the natural objects and natural world are subjected to the partial notion of mode of the Cave. Those people tend to partially view objects in an over-pessimistic or over-optimistic fashion alone within one singular perspective instead of doing so in a maximum comprehensive, systematic, and grandly-strategic fashion.

The Republic (2007) of Platonic Philosophy indicates that the proper functions performed by three distinct classes, of which the ideal state comprises, which work together for the common virtue, necessitate the development of significant normative social virtues, especially wisdom, fortitude and moderation. For instance, since the rulers are responsible for making decisions concerning which city will be governed, they should bear the virtue of wisdom, the capability to contemplate in identifying the authenticity and to make impartial judgements about it (Yan 2012). Soldiers charged with the defence of a city against the exogenous and internal enemies, on the other hand, necessitate the virtue of fortitude and venturesomeness, the individual will to carry out their orders in front of adversity and catastrophe without regarding consequence of anticipated and unanticipated individual risks and crisis (Yan 2012). The rest of the people in the city are supposed to follow their leaders instead of singularly pursuing their private interests, so they should exhibit the virtue of moderation towards a higher purpose (Yan 2012). Sequentially, when regards to the ideal rulers, Platonic Philosophy notionally defines the ideal rulers as the normative philosophers, who are completely ruled by the rational part of his soul, and is therefore the maximum rational person (Yan 2012). A philosopher must meanwhile have aggrandised his natural reason with multiple years of empirical and comprehensive study in abstract thinking (Yan 2012). It is Plato’s philosophical presupposition that this sort of person would be most omnipotent of determining what course is most appropriate for the holistic city state because such an individual of intellectual enlightenment would extract the logic of acting for the common virtue and put it into much full implementation with a heightened sense of duty and justice

from maximum philosophical perspectives (Yan 2012). In addition to that, it could be figuratively observed that School of Platonism indicates that philosopher kings are supposed to take both 1) civic interests, demands and expectations and 2) amelioration of individual standard of living into full account in services of building a more propitious life and of achieving a desirable, harmonious and stable scenario. If Platonic philosophical notion of Philosopher King Theory is assessed more profoundly, that is also an inseparable part of Platonic dialectics, i.e. an arduous process of ideal-mental abstraction consummating in the complete separation of philosophical cognition from the field of sense perception (Noutsopoulos 2019). Professor Thomas Noutsopoulos from School of Social Science at University of Crete compartmentalises four chief features in Platonic description of the dialectic which is called the “coping-stone” of the philosopher’s educational programme: (1) Platonic dialectics as methodological instruments require complete disjunction of intellect from sense, (2) the aim of dialectics in Platonic sense is to conceive the substance of everything in itself, which must be grasped as something distinguishable from the world of phenomena, (3) Platonic dialectics supersede the hypothetical grounds of scientific thought, of understanding, and moves towards the first principle which functions as the found ground of all reality and (4) dialectics rise to “something which requires no assumption and is the starting point of all”(Noutsopoulos 2019: 186).

Professor Thomas Noutsopoulos highlights that for the sake of transforming understanding to reason as the supreme form of intellectual cognition, i.e. philosophical cognition, Platonic philosophy calls for complete disjunction and disintegration between philosophical cognition and sense (Noutsopoulos 2019). It could be argued that sense perception plays a binary role in acquiring much knowledge: on the one hand, it could be epitomised as a rudimentary point of acquiring human knowledge and real substance; on the other hand, it may also exert a restrictive influence upon attainment of real knowledge. It could be deduced that as has been above-mentioned, there tends to be invariably the inconsistency and discrepancy between a) important but restrictive ideational cognition, notion and sense of knowledge and b) a real, objective world of blemishes and the essence behind the authentic world and society, which are thought to be benignly rebuilt and reconstructed in accordance with inner worlds of philosophical notions. It is fair to point out that it is a peculiar notion that philosophy is the optimal life because philosophy as construed by Plato at least seems to be very much an intellectual process of launching intelligent, intellectual, thought-provoking questions without invariably receiving immediate, neat corresponding answers and solutions, which is based on a kind of intellectual labour of articulating the surrounding world in terms of form and also Platonic philosophical epistemology chiefly expressed within *The Republic* may lead to a probable Utopian but thought-provoking philosophical life.

Intellectual Legacies from School of Confucianism on an International Axis: Throughout the globe, a large number of scholars and researchers attempt to literarily promote School of Confucianism in Chinese regions such as Hong Kong Special Administrative Region of China and Taiwan Province of China as well as alternative Western state actors like the United States of America and Canada (Louie 2001). For instance, the *Journal of Confucius and Mencius Research*, which has been distributed by the Confucius and Mencius Society in Taiwan

Province of China since 1961, continues to disseminate traditional Confucian values. Likewise, “in North America, academic associations such as the Canadian Culture and Regeneration Research Society, which publishes the quarterly *Cultural China*, have been formed” to revive or resuscitate traditional Chinese culture in a new world order (Louie 2001: 425). Significantly, since the mid-1980’s, some disciples of contemporary neo-Confucianism outside of China have attempted to modernise and internationalise Confucianism by intertwining Confucian doctrines with economic prosperity in East Asia (Tu 1996). Chinese philosophers both inside the Chinese academia and beyond have theoretically and philosophically promoted the enduring system of School of Confucianism, which is believed to become by no means simply as a Chinese essence, but to a large extent significantly a sort of “Asian value” to play an ideational counterweight to unacclimatised pure Westernisation and unite a diversification of the Chinese demographics (Louie 2001).

It is fair to argue that as the human planet becomes more synergistic, accessible and interdependent through the means of international financial transactions, international trading practice, inter-regional, inter-territorial travels, technological development, inter-civilisational exchanges and so forth, China will strive to grow more international on the world stage without fully diminishing Chinese cultural traditions. In order for certain social scientists, philosophical intellectuals, research analysts and even connoisseurs in international affairs and international studies to have a deepening understanding of chronologically-uninterrupted Han Chinese Civilisation, critical rediscovery into the Confucian teachings and doctrine is the inseparable part of that kind of research. Framing the question of the definition of Confucianism in analytical terms tends to essentialise Confucianism as a specific intellectual epistemology and ontology--a technical philosophy--that can be stipulated with varying degrees of detail and accuracy (Ames 2017). In philosophically, multidimensionally and dialectically evaluating the content and value of a fundamentally aesthetic tradition that originates from the primacy of vital relationality, taken as its quintessential prerequisite to the uniqueness of each and every circumstance, the definition-relevant question is at best a rudimentary, primary step (Ames 2017).

Many transformations of Confucian doctrines and dogmas in the 20th century corresponding to grand social changes figuratively suggest that understandings and insights into School of Confucianism will continue to vary, and that these transformations will continue to be conceptualised as reflections of evolving, varying Chinese culture itself (Louie 2001). For instance, one of the major concerns confronting the world today seems to be “the ecological deterioration of the environment, which is a new kind of social and natural phenomenon” (Louie 2001: 427). Yet, School of Confucianism has so sufficient references to Nature that Confucius could easily be interpreted as an archetype of environmentalist (Louie 2001). Within the proportionally monistic Confucian philosophical discourse, the conceptual doctrine that Nature and Humanity should be in a position of harmonious co-existence, which has been one of the rudimentary, quintessential tenets of Confucian intellectual school of thought, is encapsulated in the aphorical ontology of Unitarianism of the Heaven and Humanity. The question of whether merits of School of Confucianism can generate philosophical significance in the international arena of

exchanges, disintegration and fragmentation is also worthy of in-depth discovery. Confucian supreme ideal was the Great Commonwealth (or at least Grand Course of the World without Homogeneity), in which “morality and ritual were in harmony and in unity” (Song et al 1991: 358-359; Louie 2001: 426). The reason why Confucius highlighted the conflict between morality and ritual was that *the Great Commonwealth* was difficult to be realised over the course of the chaotic, divisive Spring and Autumn Period in compliance with Confucius; thus ethics were greatly emphasised for the stake of building an ethical society, which could at least be developed on a preliminary phase (Louie 2001). Furthermore, cross-cultural understandings proceed analogically with each intellectual tradition having to find within its own resources “a vocabulary that enables it to restate the philosophical and cultural assets of the tradition that it would understand better” (Ames 2017: 179). Analogously speaking, in compliance with the comparative argument of US Fulbrighter Roger Thomas Ames, School of Confucianism and American pragmatism can serve as the productive analogies for promoting a cultural intellectual colloquy between the academies of the United States and those of China (Ames 2017). That kind of productive international civilisational exchanges can have a lubricant role to play in front of complicated bilateral ties between the United States and China. Corresponding alterations in the intellectual, ideational super-structure may tend to be most significantly achieved in the wake of corresponding alterations in economic basement (Louie 2001). Concerning the role of School of Confucianism in Singapore, Former Prime Minister of Singapore Lee Kuan Yew extended a clear signal that Confucianism has been epitomised as not singularly compatible with modernity, but a significant ingredient for constructing a modern society and commercial centre. It could be observed that the economic development trajectory of the Asia-Pacific region throughout most of the 1980’s and 1990’s sparked growing interest in discovering Asian values, of which Confucianism has been an inseparable feature (Louie 2001).

Critical Discovery into Their Theoretical Spotlights and Limitations from the Contemporary, Inter-civilisational Perspectives: When it comes to some theoretical spotlights of Platonic Philosophy, as has been above-mentioned, School of Platonism interprets a peculiar notion that philosophy is the optimal life because philosophy at least seems to be very much an intellectual process of launching intelligent, intellectual, thought-provoking questions without invariably receiving immediate, neat corresponding answers and solutions, which is based on a kind of intellectual labour of articulating the surrounding world in terms of form and also Platonic ethics lead to a probably Utopian but thought-provoking philosophical life. However, the symbolic significance of *The Republic* of high point of School of Platonism is that it to a great extent is about the organisation and direction of human consciousness, notions and sublimation, inner arrows for pleasure, knowledge, power, and honour that people tend to distinguish in terms of soul and pilgrim. Likewise, with regard to some theoretical spotlights of Confucian Intellectual School, in some cases, Confucian references for harmony and ethics can be externalised as a basic tenet which may exert necessary, quintessential influence on search for a kind of global ethical norm and global ethical system. The ideational notion and consciousness of prevalence of public spirit for grand course and of pursuing a harmonious scenario without homogeneity are conducive to the grand work of rebuilding a should-be normative, representative, inclusive international, inter-

civilisational system of differentiated but also communal international obligations and international responsibility. Moreover, Confucian calling for Humanity-Earth consistency and unity plays a critical role in strategic formulation of how to genuinely address natural and environmental disasters and challenges that confront all state actors and civilisational entities. Notwithstanding their intellectual spotlights of legacies being worthy of abstract inheritance and reconsideration in services of empirical international studies in multidimensional fashions, it is fairly objective to point out their ideational, conceptual limitations that may be philosophically counterproductive to more accurate, targeted and comprehensive analysis of objects and even socioeconomic and politico-economic development, to some extent. With regard to intellectual limitations of School of Platonism, it to some extent puts extremely excessive emphasis over ideational role of soul in recognising the authentic world instead of methodologically materialistic identification on a real world and a real objective. In other words, School of Platonism, comparatively speaking, seeks to put ideational notion of a natural, objective world as a top priority, which is materialistically problematic, discredited and misleading in coming up with a comprehensive formula of seeing through the substance of objects accurately and dialectically. That is highly likely to cause a sort of proportional misjudged inconsistency and mismatch between the sensed objects at the depth of mindset and the authentic objects as they are. For instance, as has been pointed out in *The Republic*, pity, lust, anguish, and desires should all be restrained in services of aggrandising human happiness and virtue; people, who should be of maximum rationality, reasoning, tranquility and patience, are more conscious of arts of reason, such as measure and calculation rather than arts and imitation because the latter ones may pose an impediment to the soul (Chiang 2020). In fact, it could be fair to contend that the human beings in real practice are unlikely to become of maximum rationality, reasoning, tranquility and patience over a long run, including certain connoisseurs and decision makers in the arena of international affairs and international studies making analysis and judgement upon changes in natural environments and international arenas and patterns subjected to narrowed experientialism and narrow self-interest and fixed notions.

It could be observed that to a large degree, School of Confucianism, theoretically speaking, is not so much an independent, separate doctrine or an intellectual commitment to a certain belief structure as is the continuing, inter-generational narrative of a community of demographics--the centre of an involving way of thinking and living (Ames 2017). It could be fair to observe that over the course of the Chinese intellectual anthology, Confucianism has chronologically been associated with the Chinese cultural identity; the theoretical task of maximum interdisciplinary, trans-disciplinary, multidimensional re-examinations and rediscovery to the intellectual, epistemological and methodological notions behind Confucianism became to a large degree of that crucially cultural and constructivistic significance for objectively understanding Chinese etiquette and even Chinese intellectual traditions that characterise Chinese mindset within certain circumstances and discourses. On the other hand, it is objectively understandable and constructive to dialectically conceptualise and theorise both applicability and imperfectability of School of Confucianism within certain historical periods if the latter one is put on the four-dimensional, spatial quadrant of a far more modernising

world of phenomenal technological advancement than any time in human intellectual history. With regard to intellectual limitations of School of Confucianism, it to some extent puts extremely excessive emphasis over individual virtue and soul or morality, ignoring a necessary social structure and architecture and even social contract and the importance of gradual evolution human institution as the crucial factors of addressing and ameliorating a more just, moderate and normative society and even international society. That is because the real substance of the human beings or the human nature is of much complexity, unpredictability and variability as the positions, environments and concepts of the individuals vary on different phases and it is a dialectical complex of heterogeneous social relations reversely influencing the former, theoretically speaking. Moreover, there is an absence of scientific, empirical, systematic analysis of justice, power, virtue and alternative comparable ontologies subjected to the theoretical framework of School of Confucianism. Instead, the fixed, immediate responses and solutions to have been given and much fidelity to those responses and solutions from School of Confucianism without critical experimentation and empirical, positivistic discovery pose profound restrictions upon should-be development of scientific empiricism, positivism, and intellectual innovation in institutional reforms from the perspective of scientific research and science and technology within the dynastic Chinese periods.

What Can Be Abstractly Inherited from their Significant Heterogeneity and Unexploited, Potential Reciprocity?

Significant Heterogeneity between School of Platonism and School of Confucianism: Their heterogeneous disparities between School of Platonism and School of Confucianism can fairly compartmentalised into three aspects. To begin with, School of Platonism and School of Confucianism are of much heterogeneity in terms of historical contexts and circumstances. School of Platonism rests from the ancient Greek period of complex between the city-state-oriented democracy and oligarchy, between social chaos and preliminary intellectual debate and preliminary enlightenment that rational reasoning and emphasis over institution, structure and science play crucial role in facilitating. To the contrary, School of Confucianism originates from the Spring and Autumn Period of complex between social chaos and demise of rituals and morality in Confucian sense, between non-hierarchical interstate conflicts and agricultural means of production that a kind of dominant irrational philosophy of self-sufficient production in line with the rules and laws of the Heaven mattered more in services of singular fulfilment of virtue and power of states of narrow self-interests. It is fair to emphasise that these different historical circumstances and development patterns generate the divergent developments of School of Platonism and School of Confucianism, followed by divergent socioeconomic and politico-economic developments of ancient Greek Civilisation and ancient Han Chinese Civilisation. Second, School of Platonism and School of Confucianism are of much heterogeneity in terms of different epistemologies between pluralism and monism. School of Platonism advocates for complete disjunction between sense and intellect, and sense and real world, and the world of ontoson and the world of poson, which to a large degree is indicative of Platonic intellectual positioning of much separation and decoupling between the Humanity and the Heaven, between notions and natural objects, between a

perceived, idealistic world as it ought to be and should be and an authentic world as it is, actually. That generates the intellectual tradition and basic framework of pluralism from ancient Greek Civilisation and ancient Greek philosophical traditions. Differently, School of Confucianism advocates for complete unity and integrity between human sense and the real world, between human nature by substance and human physical condition on the surface, which to a large degree is differently indicative of Confucian intellectual positioning of monistic unity and integration between the Humanity and the Heaven, between human consciousness and natural objects, and between an idealistic world as people perceive and an authentic world as it has become. Last but not least, School of Platonism and School of Confucianism are of much heterogeneity in terms of different methodologies in front of the changes in social progress and human development. Comparatively speaking, School of Platonism, emerging from an early era of scientific and mathematical discovery from the ancient Greek Civilisation, facilitates to advocate for much abstract, dialectical conceptualisation and theorisation between humanity and social reality, which is a fundamental prerequisite to phenomenal socioeconomic, politico-economic developments, and scientific and technological advancement can be identified as part of hard power for remarkable socioeconomic, politico-economic developments. In opposition, School of Confucianism, emerging from an early era of pilgrim upon the Heaven and the grand course and should be unification between the Heaven and the human beings, and the one between the grand *Way* and human etiquette and human behaviours, from the ancient Han Chinese Civilisation, facilitates to advocate for ideational priority and dominance of ethics, mores and rituals within human relationship over social structure and groundbreaking scientific discovery and scientific innovation.

What Potential Reciprocal Characteristics and Elements Can Be Sought between School of Platonism and School of Confucianism?: As it is necessary to seek out abstract ideational legacies from School of Platonism from ancient Greek Civilisation and School of Confucianism from Han Chinese Civilisation, their potential reciprocal interplay and elements, albeit in some ways in different methodologies, to some extent play more inspirational roles in formulating new theoretical formulas and frameworks than their above-mentioned disparities. To start with, irrespective of the five categories of cardinal hierarchical human relationships in Confucian sense and three heterogeneous societal classes in Platonic sense, it is fair to highlight that their communal objective seeks to circumvent undesirable social turbulence and social instability, including non-hierarchical intrastate and interstate warfare in particular, and then strives to construct the ideal society in good order, notwithstanding being a potential Utopian society in an embryonic stage. In spite of the magnitude of spatial-and-circumstantial complexity in realising such a kind of normative society, their intellectual and philosophical expectations on ultimately achieving peace and stability at a state level in a significant sense help to realise the development and prosperity of all state actors and civilisational entities. That can on the other hand become a principal, symbolic epitome of what kind of harmonious society should look like (Yan 2012).

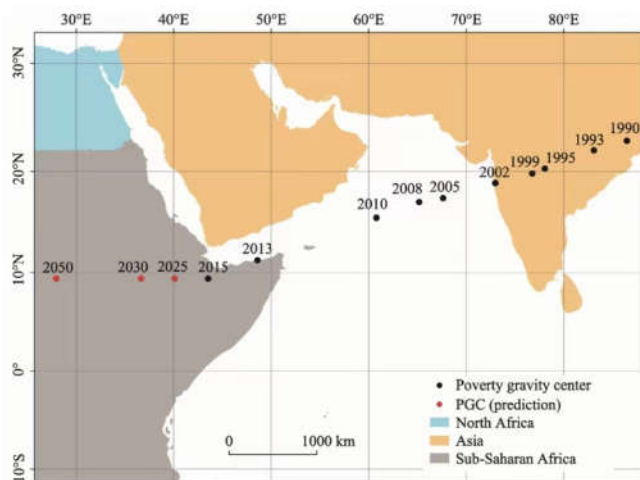
Furthermore, Platonic expectation and perception of *ideal ruler* should be a kind of philosopher king, at least a virtuous and omnipotent individual, and such a perception could be

analogous to Confucian aspirations for virtuous rulers, such as Yao, Shun, and Yu in so far as all of them were the symbols of virtue in Confucian sense (Yan 2012). Moreover, in compliance with School of Confucianism, the ruler is the descendant of the Heaven which is a divine force in the Han Chinese civilisational context and the ruler should be and is supposed to be competent in governance on a basis of virtue whereas the Heaven is a different kind of place in an Occidental civilisational context and the ruler should bear the Mandate of Heaven to rule bequeathing to the former one, upon whom the living condition of the subjects and demographics is greatly dependent (Yan 2012). Both of them highlight the significant importance of the rulers' virtue and obligation from the Heaven.

Comparative Case Studies of Major Global Development Issues on the Grounds of School of Platonism and School of Confucianism

As a result of theoretically identifying those cardinal intellectual merits and limitations, reciprocity and disparities, the applicability, functionality and prospects of School of Platonism and School of Confucianism associated with major international development and international studies issues will be philosophically and conceptually evaluated and reconfigured, ranging from the task of global poverty reduction under the international framework of United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, to that of mitigating climate change associated with Paris Climate Accord, to that of ultimately eradicating the global COVID-19 pandemic from the inter-philosophical perspectives.

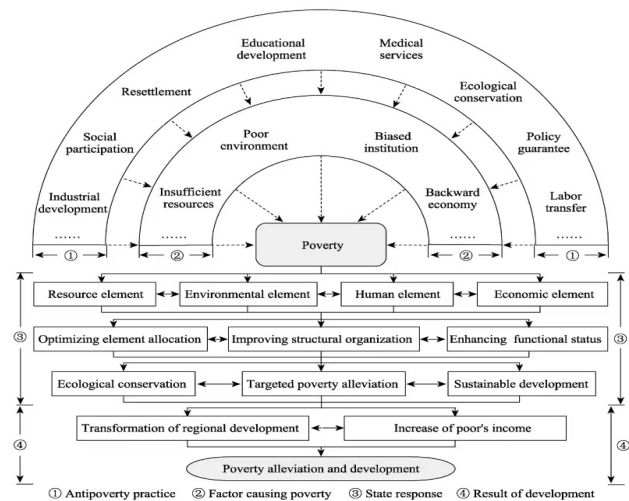
Task of Global Poverty Alleviation with Normative Definition of Justice within International Arena Associated with School of Platonism and School of Confucianism: It is fair to argue that the notion of justice of economic development should rest from sharp reduction of poverty and whereas poverty reduction is nation-based, it is a global phenomenon and global issue as all nations are inextricably interwoven in terms of international trade, demographic mobility, free flow of information and so forth. In compliance with the World Bank (2020), 14 countries in 2020 reached poverty rates between 9% and 18%, 38 countries over 18%. With 433.39 million people living with no more than US\$1.90 on a daily basis at purchasing power parity of 2011, Sub-Saharan Africa is the world's least-developed region after the World Bank samples the statistics of the impoverished demographics, which are distributed among six regions, including East Asia and the Asia Pacific Region, South Asia, Middle East and North Africa, Europe and Central Asia, Sub-Saharan Africa, and Latin America & the Caribbean Area. Sluggish macroeconomic development, conflicts, natural hazards, and beleaguered, volatile institutions of governance have at the same time aggravated the vulnerability of poverty reduction in this region (Li, Wu, and Wang 2021). "The world's poverty gravity centre moves continuously from South Asia to the African continent" (Li, Wu, and Wang 2021: 1162). In 1990, the world's poverty gravity centre was in Jharkhand, India and reached central Maharashtra, India in 2000, followed by that in Somali Peninsula, Eastern Africa in 2013, and then the east part of Ethiopia in 2015. In 25 years, the world's poverty gravity centre is expected to move to the southwest.



Note. From “Figure: movement and prediction of the world’s poverty gravity centre,” by Y.H. Li & W.H. Wu & Y.S. Wang, 2021, *Global Poverty Dynamics and Resilience Building for Sustainable Poverty Reduction*,(8), p.1163. Copyright 2021 by the authors. Permission not sought.

The two-decade spatio-timeline indicates that the African region, Sub-Saharan Africa in particular, has become the undesirably crucial, volatile region below the global poverty standards (Li, Wu, and Wang 2021). “In 2005, Sub-Saharan Africa surpassed East Asia and the Pacific Region and then South Asia in 2011” as the targeted region with the most economically disadvantaged globally (Li, Wu, and Wang 2021: 1162). It is fair to observe that just as economic foundation is definitively deterministic of superstructure and governance, so is the case that whether Engels coefficient can be sharply reduced can determine how just and normative an economic entity and a state actor can turn out to be. That is why the task of global poverty alleviation matters within an international arena because a rising tide of human development index is a strategic matter, which is indistinguishable from virtue, justice and righteousness that School of Platonism and School of Confucianism transmit to the intellectual disciples, researchers and international affairs expert as the legacies of treasures. To begin with, irrespective of Platonic methodological disjunction between external object and internal notion or Confucian methodological unity between these two things, it is quintessential to objectively identify the theoretic substances of poverty, which could be defined as a complex socioeconomic phenomenon, evolving with transformation of crucial development paradigms (Misturelli and Heffernan 2010; Guo and Liu 2022), which mainly includes resource deficiency, low GDP per-capita, social exclusion and marginalisation, devoid of capability, deprivation of rights and so forth (Duraiappah 1998; Copestake and Camfield 2010; Guo et al. 2018; Guo and Liu 2022). In that regard, a multidimensional substance of poverty is oftentimes accompanied by a constellation of functional and structural problems, including chronic starvation, epidemic disease, high unemployment, intrastate and interstate terrorism and social conflict (Brainard and Chollet 2007; Oluwatayo and Ojo 2018; Ujunwa et al. 2019; Guo and Wang 2021; Guo and Liu 2022), which seriously and disproportionately curb social and economic development in poverty-stricken regions, leading more individuals, groups and communities to fall into the undesirable trap of high Engels co-efficient and forming a vicious circle of high Engel’s coefficient (Matsuyama 2010; Guo and Liu 2022). It is fair to highlight that eradicating poverty has become the shared ideal and mission of the Humanity, whose ideational goals are matched with Polemarchus’ definition of justice as helping friends (those in

needs of economic assistance) and weakening enemies (figuratively poverty itself), and Platonic intellectual expectation on rebuilding a more ideal world as it should be lifting out of extreme poverty and Confucian intellectual expectations on prevalence of public spirit in services of building a grand course of the world.



Note. From “Figure: mechanism of sustainable poverty alleviation and development in underdeveloped areas”,by Y.Z. Guo and Y.S. Liu, 2022, *Sustainable Poverty Alleviation and Green Development in China’s Underdeveloped Areas*,(1), p.34. Copyright 2022 by the authors. Permission not sought.

Partly by the virtue of their shared abstract spirit of building a more normative world, in 2000, 189 countries cosigned the Millennium Declaration at the United Nations Millennium Summit, and were committed to establishing a new global partnership to reduce extreme poverty (World Bank 2016) for ubiquitously eradicating poverty in all its forms is the primary goal of justice among the 17 United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (Tollefson 2015; Li, Wu, and Wang 2021). Resolute cooperation among state actors and economic entities has led to national actions being taken to eradicate poverty, including endeavours to: (1) provide fundamental needs for the impoverished to scale down “chronic hunger and malnutrition, ensure food security, education, primary health care, safe drinking water, and sanitation”; (2) help more people to become employed in avoidance of unemployment; (3) promote gender equilibrium and equity in decision-making process in all aspects; (4) aggrandising of female “political, economic, social and cultural opportunities as well as independence and empowerment” (Agola and Awage 2014; Li, Wu, and Wang 2021: 1159). However, due to the failure to deal with the intrinsic relationship between endogenous development and external assistance, it tend to make the groups and individuals who have overcome poverty more predisposed to re-fall into the undesirable trap of high Engels co-efficient in case of withdrawal of external assistance (Guo and Liu 2022). Furthermore, it could also be argued that part of chief reasons for failure to prevent poverty from occurring anew is that a handful of economic state entities just partially view poverty as a shadowy representation of one singular problem itself instead of structural problem by substance in depth, which should necessitate comprehensive, multilayered structural reforms and assessments and mechanisms based on the out-of-Cave mentality for which School of Platonism advocates.

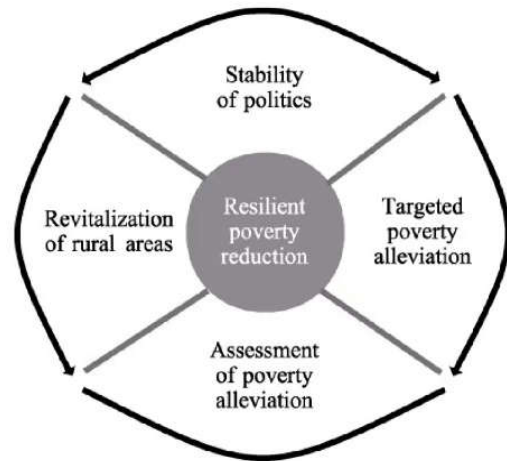
Dimension	Indicator	Explanation	Critical value	Weight
Education	Length of education	Average length of education of family members aged above 16 years	9 years	1/8
	Education of school-age children	Percentage of dropout children aged between six and 16 (including six years)	100%	1/8
Health	Medical insurance	Percentage of family members with health insurance coverage	100%	1/8
	Healthiness	Body mass index (BMI) of adults aged at or above 18 years	18.5kg/m ²	1/8
Living standards	Cooking fuel	Other=1; Charcoal=2; Charcoal, firewood, etc.=3; Coal=4; Kerosene=5; Liquefied natural gas=6; Electricity=7; Natural gas=8	4	1/16
	Sanitary facilities	No=1; Other=2; Open pit=3; Open cement pit=4; Outdoor non-flushing toilet=5; Outdoor flushing toilet=6; Indoor toilet (non-flushing)=7; Indoor flushing=8	7	1/16
	Access to clean drinking water	Other=1; Stream, spring, river, lake=2; Ice snow melt water=3; Open well water (≤5m)=4; Groundwater (>5m)=5; Municipal water=6	5	1/16
	Durable household goods	Camera, color TV, telephone, electric fan, fridge, air-conditioner, video recorder, pressure cooker, microwave oven, washing machine, electric cooker, VCD/DVD, electric bike, motorcycle, computer, automobile, or any other durable consumer goods	Qualitative indicator: Yes=1; No=0	1/16
Income	Per capita income	Per capita income is total household income divided by the number of family members. The official poverty line of 2,300 yuan established in 2011 is followed.	2300	1/4

Note. From “Table: multidimensional poverty indicators”, by X.J. Li, C. Jiang and L.Y. Hu, 2021, *Fiscal Livelihood Spending’s Effect on Multidimensional Poverty Reduction in China*,(2), p.108. Copyright 2021 by the authors. Permission not sought.

Philosophically speaking, the reasons for poverty are multidimensional: individuals’ lack of capabilities, lack of effort, and poor management of wealth and finance can lead to impoverished situations (Li, Wu, and Wang 2021). In accordance with Platonic allegory of Cave, because of the non-equilibrium between individual poverty alleviation at a state level and regional development, poverty alleviation in underdeveloped areas lacks sustained and effective assistance from regional economic growth and substantive social progress, which impedes the necessary formation of sustainable development capabilities of the impoverished (Guo and Liu 2022). Unfavourable and unanticipated circumstances such as ailment, or opportunity deficiency meanwhile result in chronic, structural poverty (Halman and Van 1999; Shek 2004; Davids and Gouws 2013; Li, Wu, and Wang 2021). In association with Platonic allegory of Cave, global inequality of non-equilibrium of distribution of resources causes poverty on an interstate, international axis (Myrdal 1970). International-affair expert and Economist Immanuel Wallerstein (1979) conceptualised the global economy as a complex system where there exists an economic hierarchy of imbalance between some dominant state entities of sufficient resources and other state entities of the economically disadvantageous position. Moreover, civil wars and indigenous conflicts regularly occur globally, engendering millions of the internal-displaced in desperate needs for international humanitarian assistance with humanitarian relief, medical and pharmaceutical treatment, and alternative assistance (Li, Wu, and Wang 2021).

In association with Confucian disposition on the Humanity-Earth consistency, the prominent human-earth mismatch and inconsistency in real practice make the unsustainability of regional development in underdeveloped areas noticeable, which is significantly manifested in the structural problem of chronic high Engel’s co-efficient (Guo and Liu 2022). Similarly, the vulnerability of Humanity-Heaven system makes the individuals, groups and even state actors who have overcome poverty susceptible to the trap of high Engel’s co-efficient (Guo and Liu 2022). Due to the multidimensionality and complexity of poverty within, a single antipoverty measure is unrealistic to completely achieve the goal of poverty eradication (Guo and Liu 2022).

Instead, regional poverty alleviation is oftentimes a comprehensive system including a variety of measures (Guo and Liu 2022). As poverty reduction can be viewed as a grand mission of justice and this kind of governance-relevant problem should be resolved once and for all, Platonic out-of-Cave framework and philosophical notion can be philosophically and abstractly associated with a comprehensive poverty-reduction framework at a global scale. By the grace of Platonic out-of-cave perception associated with problem seeking and problem solving, genuine economic growth has been considered as the main driving force which can offer employments, funds, and infrastructure construction to the targeted groups and individuals as well as supply quality education and medical treatment in poverty-stricken areas (Bruno et al. 1996; Dollar and Kraay 2002; Li, Wu, and Wang 2021). Besides the top-down measures, which are normally leveraged by governments and non-governmental organisations, the implications of indigenous demographics’ resolution, collaboration, and endeavour to eliminate poverty are in the meantime highlighted (Li et al. 2016b; Li, Wu, and Wang 2021).



Note. From “Figure: the STAR scheme for resilient poverty reduction,” by Y.H. Li, W.H.Wu and Y.S. Wang, 2021, *Global Poverty Dynamics and Resilience Building for Sustainable Poverty Reduction*, (8), p.1168. Copyright 2021 by the authors. Permission not sought.

By philosophically and conceptually identifying, quantifying and evaluating current challenges concerning global poverty alleviation, Li Yuheng, Wu Wenhao and Wang Yongsheng (2021) put forward the STAR scheme. This could also be part of Platonic expectation on philosopher kings who are supposed to be omnipotent of formulating a professional problem-solving formula and framework as well as extended spirit of Confucian expectation on meritocratic governance for the common good and for grand course. Their out-of-Cave four-dimensional, socioeconomic and politico-economic framework are worthy of analytical consideration. To begin with, from the perspectives of political stability for which S stands, this kind of sufficient and important prerequisite for a macroeconomic state and civilisational state entity to develop their macroeconomics and alleviate and eradicate poverty could not be ignored because political instability and beleaguered institutions and governance mechanisms are highly likely to become a prelude and a potential harbinger to fragile economy, intrastate conflicts, natural and environmental disasters. Second, from the perspectives of targeted poverty alleviation system for which T stands, it is both economically, strategically and philosophically crucial to launch the systemic establishment of a targeted poverty alleviation system to

identify impoverished households and communities because a diversification of impoverished groups of diverse civic demands embrace heterogeneous reasons for falling into extreme poverty and uniform methodologies of poverty reduction are epistemologically problematic and discredited. Then, a supplementary assistance mechanism is supposed to be created by intertwining with industrial powers, non-governmental organisations, and transnational corporations with the least GDP-per-capita economic powers and civilisational entities (Li, Wu, and Wang 2021). By the grace of Platonic out-of-cave mode of thinking and Confucian calling for grand course, It could be predicted that those state entities and regions of high Engels co-efficient can be sequentially more interwoven with the international economic system despite its high-volume imperfection and systemic blemishes. Third, from the perspectives of assessment of poverty alleviation effect for which A stands, it is necessary to unveil comprehensive, systematic, multidimensional, updated assessments and evaluations to the ramification of implementation of such a poverty-alleviation formula and framework. For instance, considerable progress toward poverty alleviation must be systematically, multidimensionally and philosophically monitored, supervised and quantified, followed by the constituents of, and changes in, national poverty, occupations and income, and authentic heterogeneous civic demands as well as the assistance effect (Li, Wu, and Wang 2021). This task of assessment capabilities to some extent comports with extended development of Platonic philosophical notion of philosopher kings, which are figuratively sorts of comprehensive, effective governance system and institutions beyond one singular person in control of power. Moreover, it could be argued that this formula is also figuratively matched with Thrasymachus' notion of justice as the advantage of the stronger (at least people can and should grow stronger and more powerful by lifting out of extreme poverty.) and Glaucon's notion of justice as the advantage of the weaker (at least the impoverished, weak people should have strong will to combat against poverty with strong assistance and programmes).

Last but not least, from the perspectives of revitalisation of rural areas for which R stands in compliance with the policy-circumstance nexus, it could be observed that because the vast majority of the world's impoverished demographics disproportionately inhabit in the rural areas and agriculture remains their principal means of production, rural revitalisation rightly highlighted creating better, and inclusive rural employment positions, followed by strategic investments in strategic human capital, human capacity building, infrastructure construction, and financial and comparable economic circumstances (Li, Wu, and Wang 2021). Poverty is a multidimensional concept (Guo and Liu 2022). In addition to income, it also includes many "non-monetary dimensions, such as education, health insurance and housing" (Guo and Liu 2022: 31). In compliance with the requirement of achieving the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, which in some cases are the expanded spirit of combination between School of Platonism and School of Confucianism, China's exemplary case of proportional poverty alleviation in certain underdeveloped areas could be a symbolic complex between Platonism-seeking out-of-cave good governance and Confucianism-seeking prevalence of public spirit and grand course. It could be objectively observed in China's case that through measures such as overall planning and the innovation of regional coordinated development mechanism, the Chinese

central administration has continuously amplified investment in poverty alleviation, promoted the organic combination of poverty alleviation with regional industrialisation, strengthened infrastructure construction and public service support, and effectively improved production and living conditions in underdeveloped regions (Guo and Liu 2022). As Socrates argues that poor education tends to lead to poor political results and poor performance of governance, the soul of the impoverished in relevant settings should be well-trained, exercised, and even sublimed in services of unity of physical body and soul because both poverty at a spiritual level and poverty at an economic level will make the impoverished predisposed to fall into the undesirable trap of high Engels' co-efficient and social exclusion and marginalisation. To put it briefly, this sort of theoretical and strategic methodology and paradigm for the sake of global poverty reduction is highly matched and consistent with Platonic ideational notion of stepping out of the Cave and trying to identifying and building a more normative, just, inclusive, and representative world as it should be for the authentic world entails imperfect points. That is simultaneously in line with Confucian philosophy that virtue may be self-evident but never self-executing and public spirit for grand course is the ultimate epistemology of reducing poverty as the foundation of justice to achieve supreme virtue at a an inter-philosophical, inter-civilisational level.

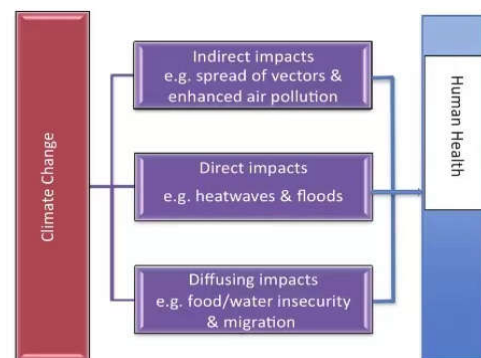
Task of Addressing Climate Changes Associated with Legacies of School of Platonism and School of Confucianism:

In addition to an association of global poverty reduction with Platonic out-of-cave perceptions upon justice and Confucianism-seeking grand course, the conceptual interplay between addressing transcending climate change with Platonic out-of-cave mode of thinking and evaluating the consistency between the Heaven and the Humanity also should be analytically discussed. It is widely recognised that climate change is among the greatest challenges that the Humanity is confronting in the 21st century (Tong, Olsen, and Kinney 2021; Watts. et al. 2021; Toffelson 2018). Extreme meteorological incidents and climate events which occur frequently under the grand background of global climate change have taken a consistent toll upon economic and social development, life expectancy and safety and ecosystem, and brought about far-reaching, deleterious impacts upon the sustainable development of disaster areas, becoming the inevitable factor of global and regional disaster and environmental crisis (Kong 2019). From the perspective of natural science, as the leading authority for climate crisis evaluation, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (2018), in its special report on global warming of 1.5°C, has statistically reached a conclusion that anthropogenic activities and behaviours have caused "approximately 1.0°C of global warming above pre-industrial levels, with a likely increase of 1.5°C between 2030 and 2052" (Tong, Olsen, and Kinney 2021: 379). Sequentially, climate-relevant risks for natural and human systems are projected to rise with global warming of 1.5°C, then further with 2°C or above, whose risks are dependent upon the magnitude and rate of global warming, geographic situations and circumstances, levels of advancement and development and vulnerability, and on choices and implementation of adaptation and mitigation options (Tong, Olsen and Kinney 2021). Level of greenhouse gases continued to rise in 2020 notwithstanding the setback from the pandemic of COVID-19 (World Meteorological Organisation 2021). The temporary reduction in greenhouse gas emissions in 2020 and corresponding measures taken in response to COVID-19 are likely to lead to merely a slight

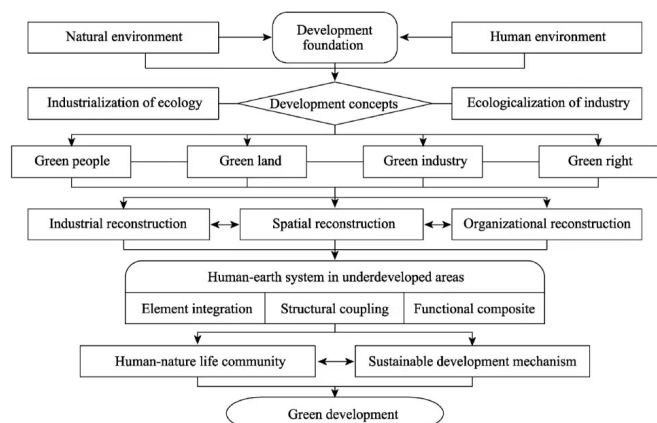
decrease in the annual growth rate of carbon dioxide concentration in the atmosphere, which will be practically indistinguishable from “the natural interannual variability driven largely by the terrestrial biosphere”(World Meteorological Organisation 2021; Liu. et al. 2020; Tong, Olsen and Kinney 2021: 379). In fact, climate change is accelerating, turning out to become the global health emergency (Tong, Olsen and Kinney 2021). In addition, it is fair to observe that sea level rising brought by global warming is a serious problem in coast region, “especially in delta region”(Kong 2019: 22). Sea level rising will make that occurrence of blizzards disaster in coastal region turns out to become of more frequency, followed by erosion of coastal lowland and coastline, thereby aggravating seawater invasion, exacerbating ecological equilibrium, and considerably pulverising the living environment of the human beings in coastal areas (Kong 2019). From the perspective of interplay of economic science with environmental sciences, the impact of climate change on high Engel’s co-efficient should not be of that underestimation. Recent history has witnessed a surge in the consumption of global fossil energy, which has triggered extreme meteorological incidents, epidemics and biodiversity destruction (Li, Wu and Wang 2021).

In this process, the economically-disadvantaged and the underdeveloped may be proportionately affected as a result of their multiple exposure to a proportion of environmental disasters such as floods, droughts and extreme thermal catastrophe (Hallegatte and Rozenberg, 2017). Moreover, such unprecedented climate crisis has engendered intensified frequency of extreme meteorological incidents and natural and environmental catastrophes which cause crop yield loss (Li, Wu, and Wang 2021). In the second half of the 21st century, the percentage point in reduction rate of crop yield will reach 10% to 30% owing to this climate crisis (Challinor et al. 2014). As a consequence, those whose livelihoods are dependent upon means of agriculture will suffer income plummeting and may merely fall into the miserable, pessimistic trap of high Engel’s co-efficient (Li, Wu and Wang 2021). In compliance with the estimates of a report from the World Bank, if addressed in an ill-advised, dysfunctional fashion, anthropogenically-generating climate change has the potential to make approximately 68-132 million of demographics predisposed to the trap of heightening Engels co-efficient by 2030 (World Bank 2020). As a result of quantitative analysis of the climate crisis at a level of both environmental studies and economic sciences, provided that climate change is put on a philosophical axis with three dimensions, then it is fair to conceptualise that few global human development theme is more urgent than the unprecedented global climate crisis, which thus should be globally and coordinately theorised, reconfigured and conceptually addressed on a basis of the out-of-cave mode of thinking and patterns. On the other hand, it philosophically reminds the international studies researchers, analysts and decision-makers that people-centric development outlook is a desirable, indispensable conceptional notion, which should be systematically implemented in managements of international human development issues, and the grand task of fully mitigating global climate changes from the inter-civilisational perspectives is a comparable strategic, inter-philosophical matter, which is indistinguishable from justice, righteousness, and grand course that School of Platonism and School of Confucianism transmit and bequeath to the readers, researchers and international studies expert as the legacies of treasures. From the perspective of School of Confucianism, green

development is established on the solid basis of resources and environmental-governance agility, and aims at facilitating the organic unity of ecology and thriving industry to realise the harmonious co-existence between the Humanity and Earth (Guo and Liu 2022). Here is another international-studies-and-philosophical question: in what way should the people take full advantage of inter-philosophical, inter-civilisational perspectives to conceptually address climate change? To begin with, Scholar Kong Feng from School of Public Policy and Management at Tsinghua University rightly highlights that upgrading of regional economic structure should be accelerated, alongside with maximum restriction on proliferation of high pollution industry around mega-cities and urban agglomerations (Kong 2019). It should enhance climate impact assessment to feasibility, functionality and reflexivity demonstration of climate on the preliminary phrase of urban construction and planning (Kong 2019). This conceptual model to a large degree has to do with Platonic notion of out-of-cave mode of thinking in a broadening and comprehensive fashion and Confucian notion of environmental development following the believed philosophy and laws of Humanity-Heaven consistency. Second, Kong Feng rightly emphasises that it should put forward scientific planning and management pragmatically, followed by the establishment of emergency mechanism of multi-department collaborations (Kong 2019). This kind of orientation of governance and management comport with Platonic hypothesis of a should-be philosopher king, who is supposed to be a symbol of professionalism and omnipotence in multilayered governance. In real practice, in industrial development and construction, it should be in avoidance of frequent occurrence region of grave meteorological catastrophes, and ameliorate meteorological risk protection standard of infrastructure in the region with massive economic aggregate and demographics density (Kong 2019). Last but not least, Kong Feng rightly argues that contingency management of important project construction and monitoring, prediction and warning should be enhanced in services of easing disaster impact (Kong 2019). Under certain adverse meteorological circumstances, such as calm wind and inversion, it should pose a restriction upon usage of motor vehicles and production of polluting enterprises, followed by amplifications of management and guideline of civic aviation and means of transportation for urban residents to minimise disastrous meteorological variables (Kong 2019). This kind of conceptual framework in some cases is a kind of supplementary methodology to the philosophical ends and intentions of both School of Platonism (philosopher king) and School of Confucianism (Heaven-Humanity consistency).



Note. From “Figure: the pathways to climate change-induced health impacts,” by S.L.Tong, J.Olsen and P.L. Kinney, 2021, *Climate Change and Temperature-related Morality: Implications for Health-related Climate Policy*, 34, p.380. Copyright 2021 by the authors. Permission not sought.



Note. From "Figure: path and mechanism of green development in underdeveloped areas," by Y.Z. Guo and Y.S. Liu, 2022, *Sustainable Poverty Alleviation and Green Development in China's Underdeveloped Areas*, (1), p.32. Copyright 2022 by the authors. Permission not sought.

In a significant sense, ultimately addressing climate change is an inter-civilisational, inter-philosophical matter by substance, profoundly thought, which necessitates interstate, interdependent partnerships that may also exert indirect influences upon international relations within a complex international arena. In compliance with Professor Gao Yun from Department of Technology and Climate Change of China Meteorological Administration, the Paris Climate Accord, a kind of international treaty, was adopted on 13 December, 2015 as a result of multiple global negotiations for creating a global model and formula for mitigating climate change by 2020 and beyond (Gao 2016). "On this occasion, the leaders of 175 countries, the largest number of countries to sign an international treaty on the first day it was open for signature, signed the agreement" (Gao 2016: 235). This massive partnership globally symbolises the consequential consensus of the international society on science and inevitability of climate change response towards low-carbon, climate-resilient, and sustainable development trajectory (Gao 2016). In some cases, this partnership is an extended, inter-philosophical amalgamation between Platonic pluralism and Confucian monism. From the perspective of changes in international relations and international affairs, it has been observed that, in compliance with Professor Michele M. Betsill from Department of Political Science of Colorado State University, the 45th US President Donald Trump's announcement of withdrawal of the United States from the Paris Climate Accord is literally a pessimistic setback in global endeavour to mitigate the climate crisis, which is a "missed opportunity to exercise leadership and advance the international community's progress toward a decarbonised future" (Betsill 2017: 189). In some cases, that can be philosophically argued that smart power strategy and the notion of building a normative international environment and international arena have dwindled as a result of such kind of philosophically-and-strategically-discredited withdrawal subjected to much problematic positioning.

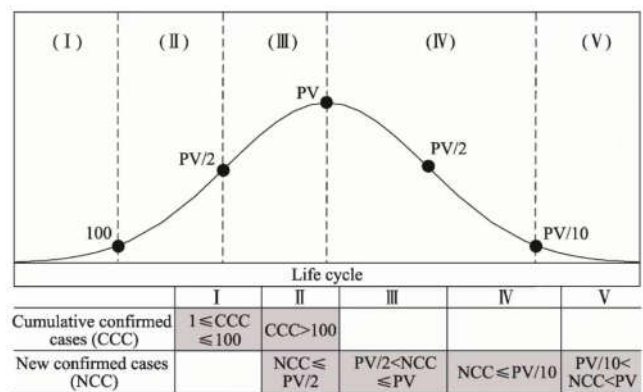
On the other hand, over the course of signing the Paris Climate Accord, as the second largest economic juggernaut, China pledges to reach a spike on CO₂ emissions by 2030 and strive to achieve it in a timely manner, reduce carbon emissions per unit of GDP by 60%-65% from the 2005 level by 2030 (Gao 2016). Therefore, on the basis of organic amalgamation and combination among a) Platonic philosophical notion of out-of-cave mode of thinking, b) Confucian intellectual notion of Humanity-Earth consistency and c) international neoliberal institutionalistic theoretical framework that calls for normative

interstate cooperation beyond narrow national self-interests, as these two major carbon emitters and two largest economic juggernauts on the world stage thus far, the United States and China as the diverse civilisational state entities and ecological state entities are expected to reconfigure the international arena specifically on the realm of mitigating this unprecedented anthropogenically-causing climate crisis far beyond the limited cave of narrow national self-interests. That shared task to be dealt with is matched with Platonic intellectual interpretation of justice, good governance and Confucian notion of prevalence of public spirit for grand course from the contemporary perspectives.

Task of Eradicating Global COVID-19 Pandemic with Intellectual Merits of School of Platonism and School of Confucianism:

In addition to the philosophical association between a) global poverty reduction and mitigating climate change and b) Platonic philosophy and Confucian philosophy over justice, shared virtue and grand course, the critical notion of promoting public sanitation security as a top priority is at the same time in line with the normative conceptions of justice, virtue and prevalence of public spirit for grand course for School of Platonism and School of Confucianism advocate. Nowadays, the global COVID-19 pandemic has engendered the world's largest public health crisis, leading to the deepest global recession since the postwar period (Centre for China and Globalisation 2020). In compliance with the statistics of the World Health Organisation, a total of 167,011,807 COVID-19 infections and 3,472,068 deaths were reported over 200 countries as of 25 May, 2021 (WHO 2021). Moreover, as of 8 February, 2022, there have been 396,558,014 confirmed cases of COVID-19, including 5,745,032 deaths at a global level (WHO 2022). The global COVID-19 pandemic has not singularly exerted deleterious, deep-seated repercussions upon civics and sanitation, but more undesirably caused unprecedented obstacles to economic cooperation and partnership between crucial state entities and economic powers (Centre for China and Globalisation 2020), especially a global economic downturn or even double-tip recession (Albu et al. 2020; Sun et al. 2021), and dwindling international trading activities and practices (Vidya and Prabheesh 2020; Sun et al. 2021). The International Monetary Fund predicted that the world economy would contract by 3% by 2020. The World Trade Organisation warned that global trade in 2020 could plummet by around one-third under a pessimistic scenario (Centre for China and Globalisation 2020). Quantitatively speaking, the magnitude of complexity of such an underlying global economic challenge caused by the global COVID-19 pandemic far exceeds that of the 2008 global financial and economic crisis and is even comparable to that of the historical Great Depression of the 1930's (Centre for China and Globalisation 2020). Here is another comparable hypothetical question: in what way should the people conceptualise, theorise, reconfigure and ultimately eradicate such a global public health crisis by the grace of School of Platonism and School of Confucianism? Take the example of China's addressing the global COVID-19 pandemic. Compared with the rest of the world, China's course of struggling against the COVID-19 pandemic is rather unique (Sun et al. 2021). As of 25 May, 2021, the total reported infected number of cases in the mainland China is "91,019 of which about 91.1% occurred prior to April, 2020" (Sun et al. 2021: 593). By 25 May, 2021, the total number of reported COVID-19 deaths in Chinese mainland was 4,636, about 99.9% of these fatalities occurred before April, 2020. Quantitatively speaking, in China, this

period between 3January 2020 and 8February 2022 has witnessed 141,817 confirmed cases of COVID-19 (including Delta variant and Omicron variants) with 5,700 deaths (WHO 2022). This two-year period has witnessed roughly 4.02% rate of deaths in Chinese mainland, whose mortality rate is, statistically speaking, below the deaths of other economic state entities from the rest of the world. It is fair to argue that these sorts of pandemic-controlling accomplishments in China in a significant sense comport with extracted merits of Platonic philosophical perception of Philosopher King, which can be, figuratively, a kind of solid institution of professionalism, accuracy and solidarity, and with updated spirit from Confucian-seeking grand course and meritocratic governance. For instance, it could be highlighted that since April, 2020, China has witnessed an effective, comprehensive control of COVID-19 complications and replications at a domestic level (Sun et al. 2021). The effective control of COVID-19 replication in China is substantially indistinguishable from influential, government-led responses and agility of governance mechanism (Han et al. 2020; Liu, et al. 2020; Sun et al. 2021). One of the sparkling theoretical insights from the Chinese mitigating spread of COVID-19 domestically is an indispensable, quintessential need for an effective, swift, and well-coordinated government-led response in addressing this COVID-19 pandemic (Sun et al. 2021). Daily epidemiological data updates were obtained from Coronavirus Resource Centre of John Hopkins University, “including daily cumulative confirmed cases in the 164 countries and regions” (Sun et al. 2021: 595). As expected, 69% of the 164 countries and regions show a significant negative correlation between daily growth rate and government response index, which generates an empirical confirmation of that effective role of government-led integrated response in diluting the growth of infection on a daily basis (Sun et al. 2021). Distinct from China’s experience of combating the global COVID-19 pandemic, albeit in some ways the United States possess a profound health insurance system equipped with advanced medical and pharmaceutical technologies, implementing major medical reforms in the United States is unmatched with the inadequacy of socialised medicine (Li 2018; Fenget al. 2020). However, the first confirmed case of COVID-19 in the United States was reported on 21January, 2020, followed by 100 confirmed cases on 3March, 2020 and has spread exponentially since then (Fenget al. 2020). As of 10October, 2020, there were 7,717,932 confirmed cases and 214,370 deaths in the United States (Fenget al.2020). The United States nowadays turn out to become the “epicentre” of the global pandemic, with 50,000-60,000 new confirmed cases per day and over 2.64 million active cases. Overall, in the United States of America, from 3January 2020 to 8February 2022, this two-year period haswitnessed 75,890,112 confirmed cases of COVID-19 with 895,389 deaths (nearly 900,000 deaths), which statistically ranks the first among the state entities when it comes to the deaths (WHO 2022). Quantitatively speaking, this period has witnessed an increase of 3.18 times in the death rate owing to the global COVID-19 pandemic in comparison with that of 10October, 2020. It is fair to argue that part of philosophical reasons for US failure to ultimately address this global COVID-19 pandemic is dependent upon part of their notion of discredited analogy between COVID-19 and relevant variants and flu within a narrow Cave without viewing this public health crisis as a structural, functional problem with systemic, institutional flow of governance and controversial lifestyles and over-consumption violating the could-be match between the Humanity and Heaven.



Note. From “Figure: the five stages of COVID-19 outbreak,” by Z.M. Feng et al.,2020, *Comparison of Spatio-Temporal Transmission Characteristics of COVID-19 and its Mitigation Strategies in China and the US*, 30,p.1968. Copyright 2020 by the authors. Permission not sought.

Optimistically, by virtue of inter-civilisational, inter-philosophical perspectives between Confucian notion of public spirit for grand course and US philosophy of pragmatism, US-China bilateral medical, epidemiological cooperation could be launched in theory and in real practice. In the middle of this global COVID-19 pandemic, US enterprises and Chinese enterprises donated a constellation of funds and medical and pharmaceutical supplies to the corresponding non-state actors, which helped to alleviate supply shortages (Centre for China and Globalisation 2020). According to the statistics from the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, by 17February, 2020, 103 US enterprises had donated funds and materials “(538 million yuan in total) to China, accounting for 25.74% of total donations by overseas companies”(Centre for China and Globalisation 2020: 17). Additionally, both enterprises in the fields of medical care, logistics and manufacturing fully took advantage of their prowess and capabilities, providing specialised assistance over the course of the unprecedented global coronavirus pandemic (Centre for China and Globalisation 2020). For instance, on 27January, 2020, the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation pledged a US\$5 million emergency grant to China in full supports of the fight against this global COVID-19 pandemic (Centre for China and Globalisation 2020). As 4May, 2020, there was an overall commitment of over US\$300 million towards the international collective, collaborative endeavour to “develop and equitably distribute COVID-19 diagnosis, therapies and vaccines” (Centre for China and Globalisation 2020: 17). Of course, mutual interstate cooperation between two state actors of diverse civilisations, diverse historical development trajectories, and diverse philosophical schools requires the establishments of certain foundations and mechanisms for doing so and there has been a kind of clinical and pharmaceutical cooperation between the United States and China in history. “Themed ‘Emerging role of China in global clinical development of novel anti-cancer drugs’, the US Chinese Anti-Cancer Association (USCACA) held its 4th annual meeting in Chicago, US on 2June, 2012, in conjunction with the American Society of Clinical Oncology (ASCO) annual meeting to further bridge the US and China together to outsmart cancer” (Yang and Guan 2012: 315). During the annual meeting, distinguished panelists and the audience pertain to the following clinical-relevant themes, ranging from (a) oncological translational research and preliminary development capabilities in China, to (b) new chemical entity development and partnership associated with Chinese enterprises, to (c) Chinese participation in anti-cancer drug

vary as the social contexts and historical contexts have been far different from their respective, separate historical moments when School of Platonism highlighting reasoning and pluralism from ancient Greek Civilisation and School of Confucianism highlighting epiphany and monism from Han Chinese Civilisation emerged, and many of their intellectual, philosophical notions have been proven of being epistemological and methodologically flawed and controversially unrealistic and hallucinatory in today's world of complexity, unpredictability and variability. However, their intellectual, epistemological and methodological merits and philosophical intentions, once associated with global human development issues, for instance, ranging from a) global poverty reduction and alleviation, to b) the unprecedented global climate crisis, to c) global COVID-19 pandemic in particular, concerning international affairs of inter-civilisational exchanges, are the very nutritional ingredients and theoretical instruments of mentally and strategically reminding the policymakers, experts in international affairs, social scientists and medical and pharmaceutical professionals of seeking and ameliorating a more normative, just, inclusive, and representative system and order on a basis of out-of-cave mode of thinking and dissemination of public spirit and Humanity-Heaven unity and consistency in a shared 21st century.

In a nutshell, maximum organic amalgamation of inter-philosophical, inter-civilisational, intellectual merits of School of Platonism and School of Confucianism as the alternative and supplementary philosophical, theoretical, epistemological and methodological guidelines to a large degree necessitates maximum interdisciplinary, trans-disciplinary, encyclopaedic perspectives and patterns for the sake of ameliorating a global, international arena of shared unprecedented global opportunities and unprecedented global challenges at a structural and functional level that are hard to be comprehensively, multidimensionally conceptualised, theorised and reconfigured and ultimately addressed on the grounds of separate classical international relations theory and classical international studies theory alone. At least, the inter-philosophical combination between School of Platonism and School of Confucianism can be of more theoretical significance and conducive to theoretical, philosophical breakthroughs in guiding real, pragmatic implementations in an international arena of complexity, unpredictability and variability.

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