DIALECTICS FOR IR:

Hegel and the *Dao*

Shannon Brincat   L.H.M. Ling

Griffith University   The New School

Abstract

This article performs a thought experiment. We ask: what if we were to engage two venerable legacies of dialectics, Hegelianism and Daoism, to see what results in terms of our thinking *in* International Relations (IR) *about* World Politics (WP)? Would some kind of a shift, synthesis, or transformation occur, as suggested by the dialectical goal of both traditions? Our discussion focuses broadly on the question of understanding social relations in world politics – the interconnectivity and complexity of social life and the potential for transformation it engenders – a question of increasing relevance for and in mainstream IR. We close by suggesting that perhaps only through aesthetics could Hegelianism and Daoism revitalize *through each other*, to be pursued through further dialogue and research.

Keywords

Dialectics, Daoism, Hegel, Complementarity, Contradiction, Sublation

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INTRODUCTION

Mainstream International Relations (IR) typically disengages from social processes. It presumes all varieties of life and living can be contained within a centralized, administrative, and militarized unit ("the state") with a common logic of action ("balance of power") within a Westphalian inter-state system (Waltz 1979). This version of IR renders world politics easier to manage, especially for elites and "great powers."[1] But IR as a chess game loses sight of much that *makes* world politics, not to mention our understanding of it. That is, the majority of the world defies state borders, not just from above (e.g., colonialism in the past, global investments today) but also and especially from below (e.g., global migrations), blurring distinctions between "center" and "periphery," "power" and "powerlessnes," with more than Westphalia as referent or orientation.[2] Indeed, interconnectivity and the complexities of social life shape world politics daily; equally important, these impart *meaning* in world politics, albeit variously to various populations. Social relations offer insight especially when change takes place across historical, cultural, religious, and linguistic divides (Brincat 2011). In this sense, mainstream IR alienates the very subject-matter it presumes to represent; yet its concepts, methods, and philosophies continue to be propagated throughout the globe as the only approach to world politics.

How do we introduce change in this context? Specifically, how do we dynamize our thinking? In this paper, Brincat and Ling engage in discourse about dialectics, the very philosophy of change and transformation. We ask: could the two main traditions of dialectics – the "Western" one of Hegelianism and the "Eastern" one of Daoism[3] – constitute a *common* dialectical approach to IR and world politics? And if so, how? Rather than preview the answer here, as expected by social science convention, we urge the reader to stay with us on this discursive journey and discover the answer, dialectically, on his/her own.

We begin with the social relations of dialectics. We place two poles – being/nothingness in Hegelianism, *yin/yang* in Daoism – in dialogical interaction. In tracing this exchange, we begin to understand how each tradition accounts for systemic change and its impact over time and space, in theory and practice. Our engagement also shows how we, as individual theorists in IR, may or may not arrive at some kind of synthesis or transformation in our own thinking about IR and world politics. The reader can judge.

We draw on two, venerable sources for models of discourse: Plato's *The Republic* (427-347 BCE) and Laozi's *Daodejing* (c. 4th-6th centuries BCE). In *The Republic*, interlocutors argue from both sides, pushing each to its limits, questioning pre-conceptual assumptions, exposing ongoing contradictions, and attempting to resolve these through error and refutation.[4] In the *Daodejing*, seemingly contradictory conditions, such as beauty and ugliness, order and disorder, essence and ephemera, are shown to be intrinsically linked, with one producing the other, inside and out; thereby leading the reader to pause, question, and think. In both cases, words, concepts, and thought itself, move and shift. Will this exchange produce the same here?

Hegelianism remains deeply influential in Western thought; Daoism, fundamental to Asian ways of life, work, and play. In this thought experiment, we highlight key divergences between the two. At the same time, we find a deeply held, shared concern within "double transition" (i.e., Hegelian sublation) and Daoist "difference without alienation" (i.e., *yin*-within-*yang*, *yang*-within-*yin*). We close by suggesting that such an approach, perhaps through the venue of aesthetics, offers a means of revitalization *through each other*. In so doing, we begin to understand social relations and their transformation in contemporary world politics, to be pursued through further dialogue and research.

Before proceeding, Brincat makes one clarification: he uses Hegel without being a Hegelian. Drawing on Creutzfeldt and Grovogui (2013), Brincat deploys this tradition as an "instance of vehicular language" that allows one "to explore certain predicates, certain precepts and assumptions" whilst ignoring, in Hegel's case, the limitations of his thought that were conditioned by the realities of his time. Brincat refers, in particular, to Hegel's comments on Daoism. Part of this stems from the unhistorical interpretation of the *dao* presented in Hegel's *Lectures on the Philosophy of Religion* (1827). These lack the intricacies of his other, penned works. For instance, Hegel depicts Daoism as a sect "occupied" with "inner life" only, "devoted to thinking withdrawn within itself," and Daoists as "pure sages" who demand that consciousness be "inwardly meditative" (Hegel, 1995: 556-561).[5] These disparagements are problematic given that Hegel unrepentantly applies his own biases to the subject, attempting to locate in the *dao* a triadic cosmology and a Hebraic connection.[6]

Nonetheless, Brincat draws on Hegel's identification of the *dao* as external and static (Griffioen, 2012: 25ff). That is, the speculative, philosophical character of Daoism and its actuality in "immediate consciousness" indicate a general tendency not only toward abstract foundations for social life but also a notion of selfhood as determinate, as "being ruled from without," that corresponds to a heteronomous condition (Hegel, 1995: 560-561). The teleology in Daoism, of inward consciousness *leading* to the human being who possesses the "fulfilled inner element" does not issue solely from the problem of externality. For the purposes of this dialogue focused on social relations, what arises in question is how Daoism conceives of social relations as reflected through the self's inward consciousness rather than an intersubjectively-mediated condition. Yet whilst Hegel identifies this keen point of contention, his analysis warrants a number of correctives that Brincat attempts to give through a humanist lens.

Ling suggests that this interpretation of the *dao* is, perhaps, premature. Daoism's philosophical premise in change and transformation; its recognition of connections

despite contradictions, generated by both internal and external sources; its emphasis on creativity as self-realized *and* collectively-inspired; its inclusion of the animate and the inanimate, the material and the spiritual, in the making of our world(s) – not to mention *yin/yang* theory found in daily life through food, medicine, literature, and religious practices, just for instance – all contribute to an understanding of social relations as ceaselessly and inherently intersubjective.

Let us begin.

DAOIST AND HEGELIAN DIALECTICS:
Amending a Lack

LING: I've always had a question about Hegelian and Daoist dialectics. There's a key difference between them, even though both propagate a dialectical tradition.

How about if we have a conversation about them? This way, we can learn from each other. We can see what, if anything, each has to offer the other. After all, both dialectical traditions emphasize the potential to *become*: that is, to turn into something more than what one started out with. Perhaps we, too, could arrive at some sort of mutual or transformative understanding through this dialogic of dialectics?

BRINCAT: It's an intriguing proposition…

LING: Great! My question is this: how does the Hegelian dialectical tradition treat, if at all, the notion of complementarity within contradiction?

Let me explain. Hegelian dialectics may recognize mutuality in social relations. That is, the Master needs the Slave to recognize him as the Master to be one; similarly, the Slave is not one unless the Master sees and treats him as a slave.[7] But Hegel never saw the Slave *inside* the Master nor the Master *inside* the Slave. Accordingly, the dialectical relationship remains external to the identities involved. Chung-ying Cheng (2006) puts it this way: Hegelians consider contradiction the only product of and synthesis to thesis and antithesis; whereas, Daoists recognize both complementarity and contradiction as an outcome.

Cheng (2006: 36) arrives at this conclusion from the following Hegelian-Marxian propositions:

1. The world is (subjectively) given as oneness (thesis).

2. The world realizes itself in terms of opposition and conflict between the given and its negation (antithesis).
3. The world develops and realizes a higher level of existence by sublating and synthesizing conflicting elements into a more integrated configuration (synthesis).
4. The world will move on according to this sequence in an indefinite progression which will ultimately approximate an ideal perfection.

For this reason, I propose, Hegelian dialectics can only propose transformation in terms of a violent revolution. This is amply demonstrated by his disciple, Marx, and *his* disciples Lenin, Mao, Castro, and so on.

In contrast, Daoist dialectics recognize a crucial role for complementarity (*yin*-within-*yang*, *yang*-within-*yin*) *alongside* contradiction (*yin* vs *yang*). Accordingly, Daoist dialectics discourage radical, uni-directional actions like violent revolution. Elements of the *ancien régime*, for instance, would be seen to operate in a new, political order even as revolutionaries proclaim their radical departure from the old. The old elements may take on new guises (e.g., a politburo instead of a palace) but they retain similar characteristics (e.g., authoritarian rule). With their recognition of the complementarities that bind, Daoist dialectics give an added layer of meaning to the contradictions that seem to repel the two poles. This approach emphasizes evolutionary transformation through accommodation and adjustment: i.e., *wuwei* or non-coercive action. *Wuwei* may seem too passive to many, especially in the midst of a crisis. But Daoists would argue, I believe, that their strategy does not entail the same kind of violence as conventional revolution would impose on individuals, their immediate environment, or the future that lies ahead. Instead, Daoist revolution would be more circumspect.

Perhaps a Buddhist *kōan* best illustrates this understanding of Daoist transformation.[1] It tells of an old woman who wanted to donate substantial sums to a local monastery.[2] She had only one request: the Head of the monastery must recite the entire collection of Buddhist *sutras*. She sent a messenger to deliver the message. Upon hearing the request, the Head rose from his chair, walked around it once, and announced: "I have recited all the *sutras*." The messenger duly reported back to the old woman what the Head did. She asked: "Why did he recite only half of the *sutras*?"

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[1] Buddhist *kōans* originated in Tang China as "public records" (*gong an*) in argumentation and speech, reasoning and judgment. Later, this practice became known in Japan as *kōan* and subsequently entered the West under this term. Reflecting its origin in Daoist and Hindu dialectics, a *kōan* startles the recipient from complacency in thought or worship with seeming *non sequiturs*, puzzles, funny or absurdist tales. The *kōan* aims to convey enlightenment through *self-*discovery within a context of doctrine, ritual, and learning from one's master/guru. "*Kōans* exhaust the logical activity of the mind so that the mind will break out of its conventional view of the nature of reality" (Jerry L. Grenard, "The Phenomenology of Koan Meditation in Zen Buddhism," *Journal of Phenomenological Psychology* (39) 2008: 153.

[2] This *kōan* is recounted in Steven Heine, "Kōans in the Dōgen Tradition: How and Why Dōgen Does What He Does with Kōans," *Philosophy East & West* 54(1) January 2004: 1-19.

In his commentary, Dōgen (1200-1253) critiqued the old woman for being fixated on the number of *sutras* recited rather than the act itself.[3] "At the same time," Dōgen critiqued his own critique, "perhaps the old woman really wanted to see [the Head] walk around the chair backwards, or in the opposite direction, to expose his appreciation of absurdity," thereby expressing the enlightenment of detachment.[4]

I draw on this analogy to suggest that, perhaps, the Hegelian-Marxian understanding of transformation as revolution only amounts to half a circle. It remains incomplete.

BRINCAT: What do you mean by "Daoist complementarity within contradiction"?

LING: Ah! In Daoist dialectics, *yin* (the black sphere) and *yang* (the white sphere) represent polar opposites. Nonetheless, each exists within the other: i.e., *yin-within-yang* (the black dot within the white sphere) and *yang-within-yin* (the white dot within the black sphere), thereby constituting an organic whole (see Figure 1).
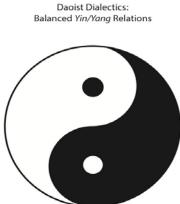
Figure 1

Daoist Dialectics:
Balanced *Yin/Yang* Relations

The *dao* expresses these *yin/yang* relations in terms of maleness and femaleness. Although maleness (*yang*) differs distinctively from femaleness (*yin*), each is incomplete without the other. More than that, *each retains the other within*. It is this mutuality, both inside and out, that makes a whole person, a whole society, a whole cosmos. Hence, neither people nor societies nor even the cosmos (e.g., "world order") could claim to be exclusively masculine or feminine (for a recent example, see Kagan 2004). To do so would be to cut off an integral element within each. One could say the *dao* first articulated what it means to be trans-gendered; moreover, it is a condition that pertains to each and every one of us.

Equally undeniable is the unrelenting movement of the *dao*. Contradictions interacting inside and out compel change and transformation – and constantly so. Because the other

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[3] Dōgen was a Japanese Zen master of *kōans*. See Heine, "Kōans in the Dōgen Tradition," op.cit.
[4] *Ibid*, p. 17.

exists inside the self, and *vice versa*, nothing can stay still or the same, even if one wants it so. Change derives not only from the individual but also in one's vast exterior *and* interior.

The *dao* honors the need for stability within such ceaseless motion. Otherwise, everything and everyone could blow up! Complementarities within contradictions ensure a certain flexibility, smoothness, and familiarity within the insistent, bumpy, and unfamiliar demands of change.

BRINCAT: The claim that Daoist dialectics focus on the "complementarities that bind" rather than, or despite of, the "contradictions that repel," recalls Mao's deference to the popular Chinese saying that "opposites complement each other" in his conception of dialectics. This may be consistent with Daoist and/or Confucian principles but is not necessarily dialectical in the Hegelian sense (Dunayevskaya, 1958: Chapter 6).

It is a misnomer to think dialectical contradictions center around "repulsions." Such terminology signifies a sundering of separate parts rather than their unity in difference and their relation with the totality. Moreover, "complementarities that bind" is far too static a notion to capture what Hegelian dialectics exposes: that is, relationalism and movement through contradiction. Complementarity is also suggestive of a normative judgment of the relation that, at this basic stage of reflection, is yet unfounded. For contradiction is neither repulsive nor complementary as an absolute but is the generative mechanism (I hesitate to use the mechanistic term "motor" here) that exposes the gap between the real and what it is becoming. For me, dialectics are less a method to be operationalized (something that can too easily fall into mechanism), and more of a way of approaching or thinking about "the social." For Marcuse, "negative thinking" characterized dialectics; it provided an approach concerned with the exposition of the "promises and potentialities" within given reality that are denied or repressed, and, the exposition of the "internal inadequacy" of accepted facts "as a prelude to passing beyond their given form" (Marcuse, 1982: 444-445). Jameson has provided a similar understanding more recently, in which the task of dialectics is to "rebuke" the "ideology of daily life" and its productive function is the contestation of common-sense, of *Verstand*, reification, and ideology (Jameson, 2009: 4, 13).

To a degree, the philosophical language of "contradiction" is unavoidable in our dialogue – and many have dismissed dialectics because of the seeming obfuscatory nature of this concept (most recently, Fisher 2010). The same, perhaps, is true of Daoism's "complementarity in opposites." And so we must be sensitive to the coming together of Western and Eastern philosophical categories, languages, and cultural-histories in our exchange. Here, expression is crucial and so to clarify from the outset, in many respects, Cheng's misinterpretation of contradiction stems directly from the many misconceptions of Hegelian dialectics, the most prominent of which, concerns the status of the dialectical triad: "thesis, antithesis, and synthesis." For even Hegel himself condemned this as a "lifeless schema," implying determinism and mechanism and, therefore, a conceptualization grossly inadequate for helping us understand the complexity and dynamism of social relations in world politics (see Mueller, 1958: 411-414).

This is not to say such "triadic" accounts do not proliferate in the literature on dialectics. As is well known, such Dialectical Materialist interpretations abounded around the turn of the last century, reducing and de-radicalizing dialectics to a mechanistic doctrine that made it appear as if the transition to socialism were inevitable. Whilst expressed in doctrinaire methodological debates, the matter in dispute was actually ontological: the human dimension of social change. Such an interpretation was contradictory because it justified both extreme activity to spur on social change and extreme passivity, a "sit back and do nothing" attitude to history, because communism was something predetermined. Ironically, this utterly ignored Marx's own active posture to history in which humanity is said to create its circumstances, just as much as it is made by them, though of course not under conditions of our own choosing (Marx and Engels, 1974: 57-59; Marx, 1979: 103). The problem is that the "triad" reduces the importance of human praxis in social change, leading to erroneous assumptions of finality, in which "synthesis" forces closure on that which preceded it.

Cheng's understanding of contradiction as the only product of, and resolution to, "thesis" and "antithesis" – and the assumption that the only possible political action that flows from this can be violent revolution – is a problematic conclusion for it accepts *a priori* the triadic schema. Such a conception of dialectics falls afoul of over-determinism that would be rejected by Hegel and Marx because of its lack of historicity, and by Adorno because of the attempt to subsume society as an object under a specific identitarian form of thought (an attempt to grasp something from a single standpoint) (Adorno, 1981: note 79, Part 3.2).[8] Indeed, it seems highly problematic against other accounts of Chinese dialectics (see Tian, 2005). Cheng's is, quite simply, a false starting point – a rhetorical device tending to misdirect our understanding of dialectics to something akin to extreme oppositionalism but which neglects utterly sublation, which I will discuss later. We must resist the temptation to force dualisms. Indeed, as Jameson has posited, the urge to solve or decide between "binary oppositions" is something motivated by the "law of non-contradiction" and therefore *un*dialectical. It imposes a false choice that arises only when one aspires to create a system (or method) out of this problematic triadic schema (Jameson, 2009: 8). For similar reasons, Gurvitch (1962) has warned against such "fetishisation of the antinomy," by which he means the tendency to reduce dialectics to the interaction between polarised contradictories.

The triadic schema leads to abstraction precisely because of the absence of relationalism in its account: without relations the dialectics of social life lack all content. As stated by Horkheimer, social movement is reliant on historically situated human subjects (Held, 1980: 178) and our pursuit of how to understand world politics should be approached in this manner. As opposed to the lifelessness of the triad then, dialectics is better regarded in at least two ways:

Firstly, as a mental faculty – and one increasingly in danger of being lost to the myopia of contemporary international theory – concerned with the exposition of contradictions in social life, that is, exposing both the limitations or inadequacies of existent relations and the articulation of the potentialities that reside in these contradictions.[9] This involves

exposing the limits of the *status quo*, the emancipatory possibilities in the present, and the social forces, resources and conditions necessary for sublation.

Secondly, dialectics is suggestive of ontological principles pertaining to specific assumptions about what there is, namely, complexity, interactionism, flux through contradiction. In thought, contradictions pertain to logical incompatibilities; in social life, however, they are relations. For me, the types of questions that dialectics offer real insights into are of social contradictions and how we can understand these in an agential, relational, and transformative manner. The key task for a dialectics of world politics then, is placing at the forefront social relations in all their manifold complexity and messiness (Brincat 2011: 679).

LING: Thank you for these clarifications. Such subtleties often get lost when discoursing across dialectical traditions.

Indeed, dialectics in world politics mean highlighting social relations, as you say, "in all their manifold complexity and messiness." IR as conventionally understood and practiced has never been "international" or particularly "relational" in this sense. Consequently, it dismisses whatever gaps or "incompatibilities" existing in international social life as evidence *for* hegemony rather than "agential, relational, and transformative" action to *transform* hegemony. Our discussion here is one attempt to amend this lack.

Perhaps we can agree that Hegelian and Daoist dialectics share a common relational ontology/epistemology. And recognizing social relations in politics – their interactive, complex, and fluctuating nature – is all well and good.

But where is complementarity and complicity *despite* contradiction and conflict in Hegelian dialectics? For instance, where does Hegel recognize the "master" in the Slave and the "slave" in the Master? Similarly, where does Marx recognize the "capitalist" in the Proletariat and the "proletariat" in the Capitalist? This is a significant aspect of Daoist dialectics that seems missing in Hegelian dialectics.

I see your point regarding complementarities and complicities as "static" and "normative." Given your interpretation of Hegelian contradiction as a "generative mechanism" to "expos[e] the gap between the real and what it is becoming," with the implication that such contradictions would propel social action to realize the "becoming," recognition of the complementarities that bind, like the same elites in charge before and after a revolution, could reproduce hegemony – and often does, as history attests.

But this rendition emphasizes only the *yin* side of complementarities. You neglect the *yang* aspect. That is, complementarities and complicities could also offer sources of positive praxis and community-building, change and transformation.

Here, history is instructive. South Africa's Mandela, for example, was more of a Daoist than China's Mao. In post-apartheid South Africa, Mandela resisted the easy path: that is, to do onto whites what they had inflicted on blacks for centuries. Mandela sought,

instead, to build a nation from its entirety: whites, blacks, coloreds. He turned to truth and reconciliation commissions so whites would be held accountable for their abuses under apartheid, and blacks and coloreds could voice their sufferings, without reproducing similar wounds, even in the name of justice. Mao was less wise. He sought to forcibly equalize China's social elites with the "masses" through punishing campaigns like the Anti-Rightist Movement (1957-1959) and the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976). Not only did these *not* eradicate elitism in Chinese society (as evidenced by its unabashed return in post-Mao China) but such methods also destroyed the skills, talents, resources, and commitment that many elites had for Mao's China.

Still, truth and reconciliation commissions are not perfect. For example, they cannot access those emotional legacies that need exorcising but escape verbal tellings; without such, the commissions could instigate a source of suffering and oppression of their own (*yin*-within-*yang*).[10] Additionally, the commissions need to recognize instances of kindness and compassion despite apartheid's brutalities (*yang*-within-*yin*). Otherwise, how could one even envision a new South Africa? With Daoist dialectics, we understand societal healing as an intricate dance between time and process, voice and silence, lamentations and celebrations.

Recognition of complementarities thus offers local context – what you call "historicity" or "content" – to contradictions as a "generative mechanism." We gain insight into *how* to bridge the gap you highlight above: that is, "the limitations or inadequacies of existent relations and the articulation of the potentialities that reside in [the] contradictions [of social life]."

Let me cite another example. In the spirit of what you call for above – that is, greater sensitivity "to the coming together of Western and Eastern philosophical categories, languages, and cultural-histories in our exchange" – I refer to the *Huainanzi* (*Master of Huainan*, 139 BCE), an exemplar of Daoist politics. A treatise on proper governance, the *Huainanzi* was presented to the newly ascendant, 15-year-old Emperor Wu of the Han Dynasty to educate him on "the entire body of knowledge required for a contemporary monarch to rule successfuly and well" (Major *et.al.*, 2010: 1). Such comprehensiveness includes presenting knowledge in both its essential (*yang*) and ephemeral (*yin*) forms. The explanation given by the translators and editors of this volume merits quoting at length:

> "Responses of the Way" [learning through the *dao*] depicts knowledge that elucidates the eternal, unchanging, and undifferentiated Way as profound, refined, and internal and describes knowledge of the ephemeral, changing, and differentiated Way as shallow, coarse, and external. Although the eternal Way is prized more highly, the ephemeral Way also is recognized as valuable. Each complements the other. This hierarchical reading of wisdom is used to resolve and harmonize conflicting positions on the fundamental question of epistemology represented in the various intellectual positions found in preunification China. In this way, the most extreme claims of the *Zhuangzi* that eschew politics altogether are tamed, and the most potentially subversive readings of the *Laozi*, supportive

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of a minimalist government and an undetectable ruler, are domesticated as a vision of ideal rule conducive to the intellectual unity and harmony embodied in the *Huainanzi* as a whole (Major *et.al.*, 2010: 433).

This approach bears significant implications for IR. In recognizing that we can have *difference* (e.g., hierarchy of preferences) without *alienation* (e.g., Self vs Other), the world need not divide into pristine opposites: e.g., a "superior," "enlightenned" Male Self (*yang*) *versus* an "inferior," "backward" Female Other (*yin*). Put differently, the world would not have suffered epistemic violence perpetrated through five centuries of "civilizing" from Anglo-American-European colonialism and imperialism. (Indeed, our own discipline exemplifies this "tradition" even in the present [Hobson, 2012].) Such epistemic violence, in turn, has rationalized unspeakably cruel, physical violence on Others. One example comes from Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda (1490-1572/3). The "Indian," he sneered, is as inferior to the Spaniard as are other, obvious social relations like "children to adults, women to men, cruel and inhuman persons to the extremely meek, or the exceedingly intemperate to the continent and moderate – in a word, as monkeys to men" (Sepúlveda quoted in Sanderlin, 1992 [1971]: xiv). Whereas, the *conquistador* almost resembles a god:

> Compare these gifts of prudence, ingenuity, magnanimity, moderation, humility and religion of the Spanish with those of these little fellows in which one hardly can find human remains, and which not only lack culture but which not even use or know letters nor conserve monuments of their history but only some dark and vague memory of some facts laid down in certain paintings, they lack written laws, and have barbarian institutions and habits (Sepúlveda quoted in Estemann, 2009: 130).

With Daoist dialectics, we do not stay at this level of hateful Othering. Instead, with self-in-Other and other-in-Self, we also recognize that Sepúlveda famously debated against and sought to block Bartolomé de Las Casas. The latter pled with the Spanish Court to treat the indigenes of the New World as persons rather than slaves. The natives, Las Casas argued, bear a "sound reason by which to govern themselves" (Las Casas quoted in Sanderlin, 1992 [1971]: 99). The Dominican attributed such natural rationality to a comprehensive range of "causes," ranging from the astronomical to the geographical to the anatomical to the climatological to the sociological to the culinary! Here's a sample:

> [T]he influence of the stars; the condition of the lands; the makeup of the parts and organs of the exterior and interior senses; the mildness of the climate; the age of the fathers when the children are born; and the excellence and wholesomeness of the food (Las Casas quoted in Sanderlin, 1992 [1971]: 99).

The natives equaled even Europe's icons of rationality:

> [T]hese people...to a greater or less degree, but with none completely destitute in this respect, have excellent, subtle and very capable minds. They are likewise prudent, and endowed by nature with the three kinds of prudence named by the

Philosopher [Aristotle]: monastic, economic, and political....And in following the rules of natural reason, they have even surpassed by not a little those who were the most prudent of all, such as the Greeks and Romans. This advantage...will appear very clearly, if it please God, when the Indian races are compared with others (Las Casas quoted in Sanderlin, 1992 [1971]: 100).

In this way, Las Casas demonstrated the other-within-the Self and the self-within-the-Other. To him, alienation, fear, anger, and violence between Self and Other could sustain no longer. Of course, Las Casas was not a Daoist and yet he was able to achieve this kind of intersubjectivity that led to transubjectivity. His guiding light was the Christian spirit of seeing God in all beings. But Daoism aims not to convert. Rather, it offers a philosophical way to *see* and to *learn* from such transformations wherever and however these may occur.

Yin/*yang* dialectics, in short, help us reach difficult insights. Those who seek to "cleanse" themselves (*yang*) of colonialism/imperialism (*yin*), for instance, end up internalizing the colonial condition (*yin*-within-*yang*) if they seek to do so only by killing the colonizer/imperialist. They cannot hope for emancipation until integrative strategies, like building bridges within oneself as well as with former colonizers (*yang*-within-*yin*), counter-balance the residual hatred.

Healing through harmonizing motivates the *dao*. I say "harmonizing," rather than "harmony," because the dialectics of *yin* and *yang*, as mentioned previously, never stay still or the same. They are always in motion, transforming through hybridizing. Thus the common Western critique of Daoist-Confucian "harmony" as something fixed, homogenizing, or pre-determined is incomplete, at best (see, for example, Callahan 2012).

TOWARDS SUBLATION:
Some Hegelian Themes

BRINCAT: These issues seem to go directly to the question of *aufhebung* (sublation) – a particular concept that is not adequately described in most dialectical accounts – but which bears directly on the relation between complementarity, complicity, contradiction, and harmonization that you raise. I will return to this subsequently.

Recognition and the Master/Slave Dialectic

But firstly, to the question of recognition in Hegel's account of the Master/Slave dialectic. You are right to point out the vast limitations of Hegel's analysis, for this struggle was rendered most *un*dialectically in his later writings. The problem being that it shifts from a dynamic, relational process of struggle in patterns of recognition within ethical life (in Hegel's Jena Period), to something that is a mere stage in consciousness/Spirit, as pronounced in the *Phenomenology* (see Honneth, 1995). Those who have since followed Kojève's interpretation have viewed the Master/Slave dialectic

as a "fight to the death for pure prestige" (1969: 7) – a subjective battle of wills – in which the phenomenological notion of the self is ascendant. Yet this merely takes Hegel's reduction of Spirit and hypostatizes it in a humanist-existential philosophy of the subject, that is no less one-sided merely because it is existential. Honneth (1995: 48), however, has offered a powerful critique – an intersubjective corrective – of the limitations in Hegel's (and Kojève's) account by suggesting that it is not the death of the subject that is of importance in the struggle between Master and Slave but the "finitude" of their "interaction partner" through which each becomes "conscious of the existential common ground on the basis of which they learn to view each other reciprocally as vulnerable and threatened beings." For Honneth, a political example of the outcome of this struggle can be seen in the "social contract" as a practical accomplishment of subjects conscious of the "prior relationship of recognition" and who elevate it to "an intersubjectively shared legal relation" (Honneth, 1995: 6, 43). Some have suggested the Haitian Revolution was the backdrop to Hegel's account and that this successful slave revolt was the moment the dialectical logic of recognition became visible in history (Buck-Morss, 2009: 59-60).

But, as against these intersubjective potentialities, the philosophy of consciousness takes the "upper hand" in Hegel's later thought. As Honneth (1995: 62) makes clear, the intersubjectivist insights of the Master/Slave dialectic are lost by their reduction to a self-relation of Spirit that solely functions for the formation of self-consciousness. With this loss, ethical life and the state (and, for that matter, world politics) are no longer perceived as spheres "in which members of society could know themselves to be reconciled with each other precisely to the degree to which their uniqueness would be reciprocally recognised" (Honneth, 1995: 58). So, the relation of "complementarity and complicity" that you raise – or *mutuality*, if I could use an alternative term – was something actively subordinated by Hegel in his objective idealist system.

Nevertheless, the failings here reside with Hegel's politics rather than dialectics. The point, I believe, that one should take from the Master/Slave dialectic – against Hegel's own reading – are the political implications of the dynamism of intersubjectivity that suggests the need to sublate deformed, antagonistic, or otherwise pathological social relations towards the ideal of *mutual recognition*. Only mutual recognition can secure the intersubjective conditions necessary for the formation of genuine subjectivity through which individual self-actualization – *of the self and the other* – becomes possible. To some degree, I see this as a reflection of the notion of the "organic whole" in the *dao* in which, as you write, opposites exist "within, and through, their other."

You also ask for an account of "complementarity and complicity *despite* contradiction" in Marx through the recognition of the "capitalist" *in the* "proletariat," and *vice versa*. As Jameson writes of the Master/Slave dialectic, the Slave is not the opposite of the Master: they are equally integral to the system of slavery. Only with their individuation are they seen as two aspects of one system of domination. Through the same logic we should grasp Marx's relational account in which the bourgeoisie and the proletariat are the contradictory aspects, relations, of a single totality. The political impasse of their particular opposition is properly grasped as the "superposition" of two binary systems,

the logical opposition between two equivalent terms (bourgeois and proletarian) *and* what Jameson refers to as the asymmetrical opposition that takes place in the ideological realm, or what he calls "center and margin." It is the reintroduction of their individuation that exposes their asymmetrical opposition. Yet, as Jameson makes clear, what should be rejected is the notion of a synthesis of this opposition and its replacement with the notion of the "attempt to destroy the opposition by *neutralising their tension*" (Jameson, 2009: 20-21, 33-34, emphasis added).

The contradiction that Marx identifies as the historical impetus toward socialism is that immanent to capitalism's development is a tendency for it to become a fetter – an imposed limitation – on the possibilities for both human sociality and productive capacities. What sublates this tension is not violent revolution but the turn to what Marx called, at different times, a "vast association" or "real community." Unfortunately this term has been narrowed to a notion of economic community of "producers" when in fact it originally signaled a far more expansive, emancipatory notion – the "genuine resolution" of the tension between bourgeois and proletarian through a *new* form of community.[11]

Marx's critique was therefore not a distributive philosophy of justice but an intersubjective social theory: the realm of freedom does not exist somewhere "beyond necessity" but exists only in genuine association. The former conception – which, unfortunately, is still very much assumed in (mis)readings of Marx – involves a reduction of freedom to abstract economic categories alone, reifying the first order of appearance of capitalist society and making the second movement merely a reflection of the first: in this case, seeing capitalism as a contradictory model of distribution that can be overcome by socialist distribution. To remain at this level, however, would be to accept the categories of thought proper to capitalistic production, remaining bound to reification in which relations between people take the form of relations between "things" because, as Dunayevskaya (1965: 67) observed, "in our alienated society that is all 'they really are'." Any resolution derived from this premise could only be partial and one-sided, whereas the entire point of Marx's diagnosis was the extirpation of this very tension *in* and *through* new relations. Freedom was to be far more than just the abolition of private property, something that was only the first transcendence. What is crucial is the second transcendence perhaps best expressed by Marx where he described it as an "association" in which the "freedom of the individual is the basis of the freedom of all."

Relations of Contrariety v. Logical Contradictions

Onto the second question related to dialectical contradictions and how they should be approached. You suggest knowledge or wisdom as combining the essential (*yang*) and ephemeral (*yin*) – for either would be incomplete without the other, their combination non-contradictory and harmonious. One can readily agree with this. However, contradictions in real social relations (or what are elsewhere referred to as "relations of real contariety") (Brincat 2009: 463) are distinguishable from contradictions in thought or logic that you raise. The difference is acute; for dialetical approaches alter according to the subject area and their content, whether we are concerned with a dialectics of nature,

logic, or social relations (to name a few areas of discrete delineation in which Hegelian dialectical methods have been applied).

In logic, sublation reflects a necessary movement in consciousness to overcome conceptual limitations or deficiencies. Thought cannot stay still because the contradiction compels conceptual development toward its resolution – that is, the unstable categorical opposition compels a specific solution. Here, dialectics is a conceptual device in which contradiction forms the incontrovertible proof that there is something wrong with the thought, concept, or theory. But this approach cannot be applied to social contradictions as some universal method. Conflict arises between opposed social forces and dialectics becomes a critical tool pushing against "the real": it exposes the essential limitations and potentials thwarted in our current understandings (*factum*, *Verstand*, and *ideology*) of the social world. And it is precisely this category error that I see arising here, because the *dao* seems to present how we should approach wisdom (in thought) as consonant with how we should approach social life. That is, the Daoist approach to wisdom is connected to a "vision of ideal rule" in the *Huainanzi* and while this may counsel wise governance for a dynastic emperor – a benign one, at least – to rule based on unity, harmony, and minimalist government, this only *appears* a logical solution. But it is an abstraction for it leaves out the the real social relations that would necessarily underpin such a society or form of rulership. Even under the most absolute of regimes, politics is not solely governed by determinations of a single ruler even if these are balanced with temperance and wisdom. Rather, it is an intersubjective process, of struggle, contestation. In this sense, while our conception of dialectics may share a common relational ontology/epistemology, the Daoist approach seems to want to understand real social relations through principles and abstractions that lead to "good" rule. In many ways, this account falls to the same idealist trap of Hegel's whose notion of reason as a closed ontological system was made identical with the rational system of history (Marcuse, 1960: 313-314). This presented a fundamental problem because it reified reason (or wisdom) with historical process, thus downplaying both human agency and structural conditions in social life and social transformation. The distinction is crucial: in logic, contradiction is a sign of error that necessitates reformulation and correction; in relations of "real" contrariety between persons, contradictions (or social antagonisms) are essentially unsuccessfully mediated problems of intersubjectivity that may, or may not, be sublated (Brincat 2011: 677-678).

Dialectics and Difference

This is not just some scholastic point but bears directly on the third question relating to dialectics and difference: the charge of a dialectical notion of "pristine opposites" as leading into, or being a catalyst for, "centuries of epistemic violence" and "hateful othering." This was hinted also in Cheng's account regarding violent revolution as the only possible political action emanating from Hegelian dialectics. These portrayals of extremism and domination echo, in many respects, Deleuze's condemnation of dialectics as "crucifying" difference and similar castigations of dialectics are quite widespread in the literature (Deleuze, 1994: 136). Yet elsewhere, following both Maker and Williams, this account is largely erroneous, an attack properly against the mechanistic premises of

"Diamat" rather than more sophisticated dialectical accounts. For contrary to such interpretations, Hegel does not treat otherness as the negation of identity that would, if true, eliminate difference. Rather, identity and difference are mutually implicated – they are equally originary and "equiprimordial" – so that any analysis privileging either would lead to falsity.[12] Hegel's use of the "double transition" (der gedöppelte Übergang) in Being and Nothingness plays this out. Being cannot be conceived without "the radical other of being," nothingness; conversely, nothingness cannot be conceived without "the radical other of nothingness," being. Being and Nothingness are mutually related and remain absolutely distinct. As Hegel says, "Pure being and pure nothing are, therefore, the same...[and] they are absolutely distinct..." (Hegel, 1999: 82-83). This is sometimes referred to as the "unity of opposites" but it must be pointed out "unity" here is an imperfect term – something even Hegel acknowledged as "unfortunate" – for it connotes sameness (Hegel, 1999: 91, 131). A far more apt description is Palm's notion of the "inseparability of opposites," like two sides of the same coin.[13] Hegel rejected, for similar reasons, the term "synthesis" to describe this process which he deliberately "dropped" in his discussion of Being and Nothingness precisely because it suggested the "external bringing together of mutually externally things already there" (Palm, 2009: 53). So, we must resist the temptation that runs throughout modern philosophy of seeking to reduce everything to *abstract identity*, of raising up identity as the "chief principle of knowledge." For, as Hegel suggests, the danger is that abstract identity leads to the exclusion of difference: it raises up a "bare form" of identity in which is absent the being and its characteristics transfigured. Despite many assertions to the contrary, Hegel offers a far richer account of a politics of diversity than he is given credit for, as he writes "...difference must be understood to mean not an external and in different diversity merely, but difference essential" (Hegel, 1999: 170, 166-167). Without diversity, contradiction and content are lost. That is, "… if in the end Reason be reduced to mere identity without diversity... it will in the end also win a happy release from contradiction at the slight sacrifice of all its facets and contents" (Hegel, 1999: § 48).

The "double transition," here, takes on acute significance. While others may refer to it as "double negation," this has the tendency to be connoted with the *abrogation* of things, whereas it is a transition that preserves and overcomes. As Hegel (1999: 126) expresses it, the movement is one in which the former is "preserved in the later... subordinated and submerged." Later, Hegel is even more explicit about its importance when he insists that it is only by means of this "double movement" that "difference first gets its due." This is because only when both sides are distinguished and observed in their own part, that they are seen as a unity in the totality: by merging their one-sidedness, the unity is prevented from being one-sided (1999: 295). If sublation (*Aufheban*) is seen in these terms, then perhaps, its affinities to Daoist notions of complementarity within contradiction may be more readily recognizable.

Yet this conceptual understanding requires qualification. Concepts, including ideal conceptions of social life – justice, emancipation, liberty, and even "good rulership" in the *Huainanzi* – are dependent on their actualization in reality that is external to the concept. In this sense, concepts are always radically incomplete, gesturing to something beyond themselves and their current manifestation. In this way, dialectics cannot be

reduced to a philosophical system or static method because concepts cannot be completed philosophically but only by *human praxis* (Jameson, 2009: 10-11). This is ultimately what is at stake regarding the distinction between a dialectics of logic and a dialectics of social relations.

Sublation

Now, we come to the key point of this section – the meaning of sublation, through a particular instance of this concept: the dialectical moment of *Aufhebung* that transcends the either/or of "understanding" in our rational judgment of Being and Nothingness. This suspends understanding by showing how each concept is related. Yet, neither is subsumed into the other in this movement. Rather, by relating each to its other, the concepts become qualified by their relation (Williams, 2007: 43) Here, Hegel contrasts his position with that of Parmenides, the Buddha, and Heraclitus, who each prioritize, respectively, being, nothingness, and becoming (Palm, 2009: 48). This difference can be seen most clearly in the *Daodejing* in which *wu* (non-being) is seen as the opposite of *you* (being) and produces it. Here, *wu* and *you* form a polarity of oppositions, in distinction to the Hegelian notion where they are interpenetrated (or for Palm "inseparable") and lead to sublation (Chen, 1969: 391-405). Yet, from a dialectical point of view, there can be no relative priority accorded to either temporally; hence, any sequential ordering of "nothing – becoming – being" (or any such variant) is false. In "becoming" rather, both Being and Nothingness lose their "pure indeterminacy" – they are determined as moments of becoming and, at the same time, are preserved as distinct moments – or as Hegel expressed it "as vanishing, sublated moments" (Hegel, 1999: 105).

However, as Palm's thesis demonstrates, throughout the *Logic* there is a variation in how sublation functions relative to different *contents*. Dialectics is not some formal method or what he calls a "logic machine" that can be applied as if by "rote." It is the content – or subject, in our case – that matters. So it is important to not confuse dialectical sublation with negation or synthesis. As Palm writes:

> When Hegel's concept of sublation is confused with simple negation, its negative sense is overemphasized and its affirmative sense is neglected. On the other hand, when sublation is confused with synthesis, its positive sense is overemphasized and its negative sense is neglected (Palm, 2009: 18).

In these ways, I have concerns about how the *dao* appears to: (1) equate social relations to thought; (2) reduce politics to rulership; and (3) champion difference to an absolute. But perhaps these would be better related as some key questions: what is the meaning of complementarity and complicity in the *dao*? What is the politics of the *Huainanzi* and, more specifically, how does it account for the social relations necessary to lead to its "vision of ideal rule"? On this point, for it seems to presage a specific normative worldview, who comes up with this vision, the ruler or the ruled? Finally, how does "difference without alienation" result from Daoist relations and how does this differ from the account of the "double transition" I have recounted above?

A CUP OF TEA?
Discoursing across Traditions

LING: What fun this is! If we were doing this in person, I'd offer you a cup of steaming tea for refreshment. Alas, we must discourse across oceans on the Internet. Never mind, I am raising a virtual cup to you.

You ask most pressing questions. These seem to center on three main issues: complementarity within contradiction, politics and rulership, and a comparison of Daoist "difference without alienation" with Hegel's "double transition." I will address each forthwith but, before proceeding, let me clarify a significant point.

In Daoist thought, any "equating" between X and Y, if at all, lasts only momentarily; the same pertains to "absolutes" and "difference." For instance, it is not possible for Daoist *wu* and *you* – which you term "non-being" and "being" but which are more accurately translated as "emptiness" and "presence" – to "form a polarity of oppositions, in distinction to the Hegelian notion where they are interpenetrated… and lead to sublation." Any Daoist opposition is always transitory and in motion precisely because they are not just mutually constructed but also mutually embedded. In other words, *wu* and *you* exemplify the notion of "interpenetration."

Perhaps the linguistic differences between English and Chinese warrants some elaboration. I refer to Ames and Rosemont (1998: 20-21) who translated *The Analects* philosophically, not just linguistically:

> [T]here are *presuppositions* underlying all discourse about the world, about beliefs, and about attitudes, which are sedimented into the specific grammars of the languages in which these discourses take place…English (and other Indo-European languages) is basically *substantive* and *essentialistic*, whereas classical Chinese should be seen more as an eventful language. If this be so, then experiencing a world of *events*, seen as persistently episodic, will perhaps be different from experiencing a world of *things*, seen interactively.

They cite the following example. A tree in English stresses the "sameness, substance, or essence" of it regardless of its changes over the seasons. Use of articles like "a" and "the" – as in "the tree" – expresses this sense of the "one and only" (Ames and Rosemont 1998: 21). "[A]nd when we refer to 'it,' it must be the *same* tree, no matter what the season" (Ames and Rosemont 1998: 21). In Daoist terms, one could say such essence signifies *you* or the presence of a thing. Whereas, in classical Chinese, one's reference to a tree reflects one's encounters with it: e.g., flowering in Spring, flourishing in Summer, shedding in Fall, and bare in Winter. Indeed, "classical Chinese has no definite articles (or any articles at all)" (Ames and Rosemont 1998: 21). "The tree *appears* differently," they add, "and why can't the appearances be 'real'?" (Ames and Rosemont 1998: 21). Here, we have both *wu* – emptiness in terms of shedding leaves and bare trees – and *you*

in terms of the presence of flowers and leaves when in season. Yet both *wu* and *you* pertain to the same tree, only at different times and under different conditions.

This is not just a linguistic formalism. We see Daoist interpenetration reflected in political strategies. For example, Sunzi (c. 5th-century BCE) emphasizes in *The Art of War* that victory and defeat are never absolute. The superior general knows that defeat always lurks within victory, and victory within defeat. Nothing can be assumed. This does not mean a constant vigilance. Rather, *yin*/*yang* theory urges a comprehensiveness to policy-formation that is relational and dynamically so.

Another example comes from Zhuge Liang (181-234 AD), Chancellor of Shu-Han during the Three Kingdoms era. In his treatment of the "barbaric" peoples defeated by the Shu-Han military, Zhuge Liang decides against leaving an occupational army for the following reasons:

> It would not be easy (*yi*) for three reasons. Stationing outsiders would require a military occupation [*yang*-occupation], but there is no way the troops could sustain/feed themselves [no *yin* counterpart], that's one difficulty. The barbaric peoples have suffered much [*yin*-emptiness], losing fathers and brothers (on the battlefield). If I were to station outsiders here without troops [another *yin*-emptiness], it would be a disaster in the making. That's a second difficulty. The barbaric peoples have murdered and killed [*yang*-aggressiveness], naturally they harbor suspicions (that would lead to other aggressive acts), especially of outsiders [more *yang*-aggressiveness]; that's a third difficulty. (Due to such imbalances between *yin* and *yang*), I don't leave anyone behind [*yin*-withdrawal] and I don't transport away any supplies (that is, he leaves behind supplies and sustenance) [*yang*-advance], thereby allowing us to remain in mutual peace (balance) and without incident (*wushi*) (Zhuge Liang quoted in Author 2: 94-95).

Put differently, Daoist dialectics does not and cannot separate what you call contradictions in logic and "*real*" contrariety" in social relations. One invariably reflects and shapes the other. One does not have more "realness" over the other even as one domain (i.e., logic) may be more abstract than the other (i.e., social praxis or social relations). This principle stems from the *dao*'s acceptance of the ontological parity between *yin* (e.g., *wu*) and *yang* (e.g., *you*).

Another way to understand Daoist dialectics is through water as a metaphor.

The Dao of Water

"The highest efficacy," the *Daodejing* quotes Laozi saying, "is like water":

> It is because water benefits everything [*wanwu*]
> Yet views to dwell in places loathed by the crowd
> That it comes nearest to proper way-making
> (Laozi quoted in Ames and Hall, 2003: 87).

And again:

> The meekest in the world
> Penetrates the strongest in the world,
> As nothingness enters into that-which-has-no-opening,
> Hence, I am aware of the value of non-action [*wuwei*]
> And of the value of teaching with no-words [*wuming*].
> As for the value of non-action [non-coercion],
> Nothing in the world can match it.
> (Laozi quoted in Thompson, 1998: 17).

Not only does water inhere with its own transformative possibilities (e.g., hot/cold, soft/hard, tranquil/roiling). But it also contains multiple layers of meaning, significance, and judgment that flow ceaselessly, one into the other, one affecting the other (cold-within-hot and hot-within-cold, and so on). No one condition stays as intrinsically good (e.g., tranquil) or bad (e.g., roiling), desired (e.g., cleansing) or repulsed (e.g., muddy), useful (e.g., hydro-power) or not (e.g., flooding). It depends, in short.

Another example of the *dao*'s water-like relationality comes from Chinese medicine. Ames and Rosemont (1998: 25) note:

> The Chinese *materia medica* describes the chest as *yin* (receptive, soft, submissive) with respect to the back, which is *yang* (creative, hard, aggressive). But in relation to the abdomen, the chest is *yang*. But these relations, too, can be changed, depending on anatomical conditions (a broken leg, a pinched nerve, and so on). That is to say, nothing is altogether *yin* or *yang* in and of itself, but only in relation to one or more other "things," temporally contextualized.

The *dao* imparts a simple message. Social relations may be structured in particular ways but our understanding and treatment of them can produce very different outcomes even when bound to the same structures. Here, the concept of non-coercive action relates intimately to the concept of "no-mind" (*wuxin*). The 11th-century Song poet-statesman, Su Shi, evokes the Buddhist image of a "thousand arms and eyes"[14] attached to the same body to make this point (Su quoted in Egan, 1994: 151). Each arm or eye could find its "proper place" and live in contentment, he wrote, if we are freed of false fears and desires (i.e., "no-mind"). One could transpose this image to all the peoples and societies in the world attached to one body, the Earth.

Put differently, one could be concerned about Daoist politics but not overly so. What may seem like Daoists "equating" social relations to thought, "reducing" politics to rulership, and championing difference to an "absolute" cannot remain the case, even if the charge is true, given the fluidity and porousness that *yin/yang* theory applies to everything and everyone. Daoist contradiction and conflict exist *in relation to* complementarity and complicity, and *vice versa*; similarly with politics and rulership, difference and absolutes.

Complementarity and Contradiction, Complicity and Conflict

An excerpt from the 18th-century novel, *Dream of the Red Chamber* (*Hong Lou Meng* or HLM) illustrates complementarity within contradiction and *vice versa*. For instance, the story's hero, Baoyu, has a cousin, also named Baoyu. The last names of the two boys pun for their characters: Zhen ("real") for the cousin; Jia ("fake"), for our hero.[15] Juxtaposed thus, they seem to oppose each other – although Zhen Baoyu started out as an eccentric like Jia Baoyu but later reformed to orthodox ways. Zhen ("real") Baoyu becomes a paragon of virtue who studies hard for the imperial exams. Jia ("fake") Baoyu (an alter ego for Cao Xueqin, the "real" author of HLM)[16] wants to play and have fun only, never to grow up. But under pressure from his fearsome, conservative father, Jia ("fake") Baoyu emulates Zhen ("real") Baoyu by putting his considerable talents to the grindstone and ranking high in the imperial exams. But Jia ("fake") Baoyu ultimately reverts to his "real" nature by giving it all up to become a roaming, penniless monk. Which is the "real" Baoyu, the novel asks? Perhaps neither. Maybe the "realness" and "fakeness" of either Baoyu, the novel suggests, arises from their relationship, not any objective attributes. And if so, the novel further prompts, why are we so concerned with realness or fakeness in the first place?

Politics and rulership manifest a similar dialectic.

Politics and Rulership

One must always watch for "reducing" politics to rulership. But if one follows Daoist principles, these relations are neither one-way nor fixed. Indeed, Liu An, compiler of the *Huainanzi*, would not disagree with your point below:

> Even under the most absolute of regimes, politics is not solely governed by determinations of a single ruler even if they balance temperance and wisdom. Rather, it is an intersubjective process, of struggle, contestation.

Precisely so, Liu An wanted the young emperor to understand *how* to govern under such circumstances. First, one has to recognize that such processes exist; otherwise, any ruler could simply impose military power, as did the First Emperor Qin Shihuangdi (259-210 BCE). His dynasty ended shortly after he died. From this first realization comes a second: that is, how best to manage these processes. A third follows accordingly: seeming opposites do not just create each other ("mutuality") but also live within each other ("embeddedness").

Fanon saw both mutuality and embeddedness in relations between colonizer and colonized. Since he was not a Daoist, he saw the dialectic in one-way terms only. He diagnosed colonial race relations thus:

> Now – and this is a form of recognition that Hegel had not envisaged – who but a white woman can do this for me? By loving me she proves that I am worthy of

white love. I am loved like a white man. I *am* a white man (Fanon, 1967 [1952]: 25, emphasis added).

Colonial desire, for Fanon, operates uni-directionally. Only black folks shoulder its burden, often resorting to what he called "hallucinatory whitening" (Fanon, 1967 [1952]: 100). They develop a psychopathology of race, alienation, and other neuroses; in contrast, whites seem to benefit only from colonial desire. They can pick and choose, dismiss and disregard, at will. Fanon did not consider that white men and women could suffer from similar hallucinations, pathologies, alienations, and neuroses about race – or that black folks could admire, appreciate, and desire one another. For Fanon, the binary of race and gender remains fixed. "The white man is sealed in his whiteness. The black man in his blackness" (Fanon, 1967 [1952]: 9). And due to such fixity, Fanon could offer only one option for emancipation: "What I insist on is that the poison [whiteness] must be eliminated once and for all" (Fanon, 1967 [1952]: 62).

Should Fanon have taken a Daoist-dialectical perspective, he would have drawn deeper insights from his own observations. He would have noted the transformations enacted by colonial desire and why it held so powerfully for subordinated peoples. That is, where black men felt they were made *yin* (feminized, emasculated) by white, colonial society, they could rise to a semblance of *yang* (masculinized, virilized) when capturing the love or attention of a white woman. In this way, they could alter their social relation with themselves as well as white, colonial society. One could critique that this transference by black men from *yin* to *yang* by succumbing to colonial desire does nothing to transform it. Nonetheless, the *dao* reminds us: nothing stays fixed or the same. It is highly likely that a relationship enacted through colonial desire could lead to more sustainable realizations about what it means to be *human*, not just a colonized Other.[17]

We see how the distinction you raise between "contradictions in real social relations" and "contradictions in thought or logic" falters. A Daoist would ask: what are *real* social relations, where do these come from, and how do they exist apart from thought or logic? You state the following:

> The difference is acute; for dialetical approaches alter according to the subject area and their content, whether we are concerned with a dialectics of nature, logic, or social relations...

A Daoist would respond: does not such contingency apply to politics, as well? For an example, I turn again to that master strategist of *The Art of War*:

> Disorder comes from order, cowardice stems from courage, and weakness is born of strength. Order or disorder depends on organization, courage or cowardice on circumstances, strength or weakness on disposition (Sun, 1993: 65).

That is, thought and action *together* make the difference. Thought ensures we pay attention to what lies beneath the surface, and action confirms the need for it.

Key to this discussion is what you highlight above: Daoist "difference without alienation" and Hegelian "double transition" (sublation).

Here, I find a revitalizing commonality.

"Difference without Alienation" and the "Double Transition"

The notion of "double transition" demonstrates Hegelian mutuality. Being and Nothingness represent two, distinct poles but each needs the other to *become*. Daoism's water metaphor interprets the relationship differently but retains a similar understanding of distinctions (steam vs ice) arising from and returning to a common, organic base (water); consequently, difference and sameness do not just co-exist but also co-produce. Perhaps we can do something with this in the next iteration of our dialogic of dialectics.

CONTENTIONS AND CLARIFICATIONS:
Stubbing Toes in Our Travels

BRINCAT: There remains a number of points of contention here. The first concerns the belief that "*yin/yang* theory applies to everything and everyone." This tendency toward raising the *dao* to a universal system brings in the problems of any grand theory and recalls all the limitations of an alleged dialectics of nature that I think were abandoned for good reason: it cannot (yet) be substantiated. Similarly, the tendency towards absolutizing, as in the claim that "water benefits everything," leads to inaccuracies posed as generalities that seem contradictory to the importance you attach to context and contingency elsewhere. In the list of transformative possibilities of the condition of water (cold, roiling, muddy, etc) an emphasis was placed on dependency on context but which is abandoned in making the benefits of water an absolute. For we only need to look to the recent typhoon in the Philippines to see its destructive condition. It cannot be both ways: either water is beneficial for "everything," or, in given contexts, it is, and in other contexts, it is not. Absolutist claims are unnecessary and dangerous for they fix determinations, cloud over context, and lose analytical purchase on difference.

The second concerns the return to the ideational, abstracted from relations, to explain and judge social relations. It is claimed that social relations exist only through thought or logic, and on this basis Su Shi's idea of contentment through freeing one of false fears/desires, or Fanon's inability to draw deeper insights from his colonial experience, are two sides of this process: one where successful (re)conceptualization creates a mental chimera of contentment; the other, a failure to (re)conceptualize resulting in fixity in which the only endpoint can be seen in elimination of the opposition. In the former, what is neglected is that alongside false fears lie real ones, fears that are not reducible to how we think about them, as if we could somehow will "contentment" in the face of mass atrocity or oppression. The same type of categorical issue arises in Fanon, for the solution offered to "rise to a semblance of *yang*" is to be trapped within the given categories of black/white, masculine/feminine, and thereby remain in first-order critique. It accepts uncritically the given form (*Verstand*) of race and sexuality, merely refortifying these

reified categories that are part of a complex of oppression, imperialism, racism, and patriarchy. The contradiction comes from relations themselves, not from how they are thought, conceptualized or represented, however strong the ideological form that attempts to conceal them.

Returning to the Master/Slave dialectic may be helpful here. For the Master/Slave is not a relation of equivalencies, nor is it existent only when thought of in this manner. Rather, it is in the individuation of the two – something properly phenomenological – that exposes their asymmetrical opposition. This is where the vagaries of Daoist complementarity are weakest, for taken from specific vantage points, complementarity can be seen everywhere and anywhere amidst relations, so that it lacks analytical purchase as a category. Of course, the Master and Slave exist in a relation of complementarity at a conceptual level but here is the extent of its explanatory power. Complementarity in social life denuded of social relations and replaced by logic and thought tells us very little for understanding and transformation. Dialectics compel us to go far more into these relations to explode their tension, rather than merely reconceptualizing it. But perhaps this merely expresses our different knowledge constitutive interests in using dialectics, for mine is centered on emancipatory transformation.

LING: On our road to consensus, we invariably stub toes on disagreements lying here and there. But perhaps these stubbings enable us to move forward so we may still travel together. So let us examine each more closely.

I find it curious, for example, that you insist on setting up a Great Wall between Hegelian and Daoist dialectics. In the "caveats," you open by characterizing the *dao* as "external and static," "speculative," and "abstract" with a "determinate" sense of selfhood that is "ruled from without"; yet its "inward consciousness" prohibits any access to social relations as an "intersubjectively-mediated condition." Elsewhere, you depict Daoist dialectics as prioritizing "appearance" over "reality," "philosophy" over "praxis," "abstraction" over "concreteness," "false" fears over "real" ones. You reiterate your critique of complementarity as "seen everywhere…so that it lacks analytical purchase." Daoist interpretations of Hegelian dialectics, like those of Cheng's, qualify as "erroneous," leading to a "misreading" based on "misnomers," "misinterpretations," "misconceptions," and "false" starting points that "misdirect." You point out that the Daoist metaphor of water benefitting "everything" belies its powerful ability to harm like Typhoon Haiyan. Alternatively, you state that "the Slave is not the opposite of the Master: they are equally integral to the system of slavery. Only with their individuation are they seen as two aspects of the one system of domination"; at the same time, you state: "it is in the individuation of the two…that exposes their asymmetrical opposition." Indeed, you underscore, "identity and difference are mutually implicated – they are equally originary and 'equiprimordial' – so that any analysis privileging either would lead to falsity." You end that perhaps we have "different knowledge constitutive interests in using dialectics, for [yours] is centered on emancipatory transformation."

Why such sound and fury? Leaving aside some internal contradictions[18] and obvious inaccuracies,[19] I respond that *yin/yang* dialectics would not disagree with your last point:

that is, identity and difference, like Master and Slave, are "equally originary" and "equiprimordial." Precisely so, does not complementarity play a role here? Would not the brittleness of contradictions, otherwise, break apart any system? What holds them together, after all? As for dreaded universalism, what's wrong with that? How can we talk to each other without some kind of universalism at work? Isn't universalism a problem only when it is deprived of a dialectic with particularism? Clearly, *yin/yang* theory does not impose such singularity. Because difference can co-exist with sameness, thereby perforating alienation, *yin/yang* dialectics harbor the possibility for emancipatory transformation. For Daoism is, if nothing else, dedicated to the proposition of freedom.

Perhaps we understand these terms differently. For Daoist dialectics, "emancipation," "freedom," and "transformation" each involves an internal as well as external dialectic (*yin* vs *yang* as well as *yin*-within-*yang* and *yang*-within-*yin*). It is not enough to be "agential" in a liberal sense: that is, individualistic, autonomous, and action-based only. Rather, Daoist dialectics would pair these with interrogations of a larger context (community or cosmos), so creativity could arise from oneself as well as in conjunction with others, and motivated in action by an enlightenment that stems from philosophical inquiry.[20] Is this not a definition of intersubjectivity? Moreover, intersubjectivity under Daoist dialectics flows dynamically, openly, and evenly. The same principles apply to Daoist notions of health, whether individual or societal, where balance prevails between the physical and the spiritual, the animate and the inanimate, the seen and the unseen. These strategies are not just medically therapeutic but also bear implications for IR. Elsewhere, I draw on Daoist medical principles and practices to recommend another way to heal the festering wounds between India and China after their 1962 border war (Ling forthcoming).

On interpenetration, Daoists would inquire further: that is, *when* and *how* this happens, *what* results, and, most importantly, *why* it matters, in what ways and under which conditions, to *whom*. Chinese medicine, cited above, instantiates this kind of relational fluidity and transformational development. That interpenetration takes place, for Daoists, represents the first step only. Relatedly, I would like to know, *how* is an interpretation "erroneous" or a "misreading," for and by *whom*? By implication, you suggest there is a "correct" and "true" reading. If so, who decides, by what criteria, and for how long? Does this not suggest the kind of absolutism and universalism that you find so distasteful in Daoism – that is, assuming you're correct in finding it so? What if we were to focus, instead, on *why* certain perspectives arise from certain corners rather than that they do? Wouldn't that be more productive?

You see Daoism as philosophy only when precisely the opposite pertains! The cultural heirs to *yin/yang* theory may not know all the intricacies of Daoist philosophy (*dao xue*) but they utilize its principles daily and routinely: for example, in terms of how to cook and eat food, treat illnesses, write/read/perform the arts, devise strategies, formulate policies, and pray to the gods.[21] In short, the principles of *yin* and *yang* permeate all levels of social relations as social praxis, not necessarily as abstract philosophy. Of course, the latter informs, frames, and signifies the former but the principles of *yin* and *yang* have long ago turned into customary practice over the millennia.

BRINCAT: Disagreements and "stubbings" are to be welcomed. But "internal contradictions," "obvious inaccuracies" and questions of interpretation must be addressed, lest we misunderstand each other at the close of our dialogue. The various aspects of my critique of Daoism that you summarize in one short paragraph are all context specific. Without context, they are rendered false. To list them without this detail is a keen rhetorical device but not a representational one. It makes it appear as a Great Wall is being built when, in actuality, many points of commonality were established.

Firstly, while it may appear contradictory to be, at the same time, directed by "inward consciousness" and "being ruled from without," this refers to Hegel's conception of the universal and its relation to the individual in the *dao*. For Hegel, the problem was that because "the universal, the higher, is only the abstract foundation, the human being thus abides in it without any properly immanent, fulfilled inner element"; as such, during the preceding stage where individuals strive in their progression to the universal, "they have no footing within themselves, no immanent, determinate inwardness" (Hegel, 1995: 560-561). So, both one and at the same time, the *dao* is directed to "inward consciousness" but at the same time is "being ruled from without." In the Hegelian sense, this corresponds to a heteronomous condition, recalling that heteronomy for Hegel, as reflected in the *Phenomenology*, is the condition of submission to the moral authority of external influences. Of course, one may well disagree with Hegel's conception of freedom and heteronomy, but not that it is internally contradictory. Moreover, it must be reiterated that my objection did not rest on agreeing with Hegel's account of the *dao*, which was conceded to be problematic, but that the *dao* begins to understand social life from the self's inward consciousness rather than as an intersubjectively-mediated condition. This is to say, its starting point is from a *particular* aspect, and from this particular aspect it refracts all else. This is not to say that the *dao* is wrong, but that it can become incomplete if left at this stage of reflection.

Secondly, it is unwarranted to claim that I interpreted inaccurately your account of water that you affirm "benefits everything." What I contest is that by referring this transformative condition across time and space is to overlook the particular *and* to overlook context. The issue is not just that referring to the cosmos is beyond human experience. It is to overlook particular instances where water does not benefit a particular being at a particular time/place. Removing the particular leads to an abstract – and in this case, romanticized – notion of the totality. The statement water "benefits everything" is not sustainable from the particular vantage of the particular victims of Typhoon Haiyan. It is only sustainable from the vantage of a cosmos that has been conceived in abstraction from the particular. This cosmology has a subjectively and historically-derived value attachment to water that is devoid of the contexts, differences, and contradictions through which other subjectivities and histories may experience it. One can readily concede transformative possibilities of water without needing to absolutize them. Indeed, to absolutize water in such a way is to fall to 'either – or' determination that dialectics shows must lead to contradiction within itself (Hegel, 1999: § 11).

Finally, the problem of "erroneous" interpretation was raised specifically against those readings of Hegel that foist the dialectical triad onto his thought. An interpretation is

"erroneous" when it claims somebody said something when s/he did not. On the fact that Hegel never used the triad there is complete agreement amongst scholars of Hegel: there is not one instance in his collected works where he uses it other than to deride it as a "lifeless schema" and "sleight-of-hand" (see Glockner, 1957). Marx equally derided it as a "wooden" trichotomy" (see Marx 1987: 513). The triad is attributable to Fichte, not Hegel, and was read into Hegel by Chalybäus. Those who continue to suggest Hegel's dialectics is based on "thesis, antithesis and synthesis" are therefore continuning to fabricate an untruth that we as scholars have a duty to expose and correct. Such misreadings could probably be given up to interpretive licence but for the fact that Cheng and others use this fabrication to then castigate Hegelian dialectics as extreme oppositionalism – as if we are building Great Walls, rather than trying to build constructive bridges of understanding. To coninue to let such blatant errors go uncontested would be unconscionable. To suggest that I, in "fury," am then forcing a "correct" and "true" reading of dialectics is uncalled for. The words of others should not be manipulated in the service of persuasion.

These are just some of the challenging differences that must await further dialogue but I would rather end on our shared commonality. You claim that "thought and action together make the difference" and emphasize "difference without alienation" (or mutuality) as revitalizing. I agree: it is only through human praxis that a social life of mutuality can be actualized. This indicates a move beyond mere identity politics towards a new intersubjective subject through which Hegel's initial skepticism against Daoism as lacking mediated intersubjectivity may be overcome. Here, I believe Dunayevskaya's account of Hegel's second negation as "self-developing subject" in her reading of the *Logic* is of key importance, for it reintegrates the humanist dimension that is too often lost when discoursing on dialectical themes, shifting towards a notion of history as "the struggle for freedom" (Dunayevskaya, Marcuse, and Fromm, 2012: 79-80, 35). The intersection with recognition theory is here obvious regarding the struggle for the actualization of all aspects of individual freedom as a social condition that can be achieved only intersubjectively. This also traces back to Marx's insistence on genuine association – the need to look beyond the false realities of late capitalist society towards a free community – as the moment of self-determination without domination or alienation. This transposes the idea of a free, associated (intersubjective) subject for Hegel's Notion (Dunayevskaya, Marcuse, and Fromm, 2012: 8).

But as Dunayevskaya also claims, "the limits of the age" create the conditions for the concrete but also exhaust it. Philosophical cognition and expressions of freedom are dependent on the conditions that give rise to them, so any "new leap to freedom" must be based on the impulses emerging from the movements visible in the daily lives of people and their relations as they reconstruct their societies anew in altered conditions (read: contradictions) of late capitalism (Dunayevskaya, Marcuse, and Fromm, 2012: 88-74, Dunayevskaya, 1965: 71-72). The most glaring of these are the universal environmental and ecological contradictions (biospheric, oceanic, atmospheric) that embody the lived antagonisms in all our social relations. With this litany of environmental crises the entire edifice of the subject/object dualism is brought into question: the domination of nature by man, the domination of man by man. While this compels a shift in *Verstand* of our given

ways of doing things – and suggests that the question is no longer revolution or barbarism, but revolution or extinction – the choice of praxis is ours. The backwards step is always possible.

A MODEST BEGINNING:
Concluding for Now

LING: Applying dialectics, whether Hegelian or Daoist or both, to challenges in the environment – or any kind of conflict resolution – is a worthy project, indeed! I highly applaud such endeavors.[22]

But first, perhaps we could further our thought experiment? Let us celebrate this dialogic of dialectics by reaching beyond established images and metaphors for Hegelianism and Daoism, respectively. In particular, aesthetics can help us imagine what's possible, not just what's available. We are thus compelled to think and act creatively, whether by an individual or a community. Bleiker has noted the same:

> Aesthetics, in this sense, is about the ability to step back and reflect and see political conflict and dilemmas in new ways. This is why aesthetics refers [sic] not only to practices of art – from painting to music, poetry, photography and film – but also, and above all, to the type of insights and understanding they engender (Bleiker, 2009: 2).

Indeed, the *dao* upholds aesthetics as *yin* to hegemony's *yang*. "To be fully integrative," writes Ames on the *Zhuangzi*, "individuals must overcome the sense of discreteness and discontinuity with their environment, and they must contribute personally and creatively to the emerging pattern and regularity of existence called *dao*" (Ames 1998: 4). The enlightened life must feel right in addition to knowing and doing right: "[A]ny 'ethical' judgments in the narrow sense are going to be derived from aesthetic sensibilities – the intensity, integrity, and appropriateness that one detail has for its environing elements as interpreted from some particular perspective" (Ames, 1998: 5).

We have made a modest beginning with this exchange. (Perhaps it approaches what Hegel would identify as an "association," if not yet vast, and what Daoists would recognize as a sprout of intersubjectivity?) Our dialogue, though, is necessarily introductory and overly cerebral as we try to establish some starting points. These contain points of conflict and contradiction as well as potential nodes of complementarity and complicity. Perhaps in our next iteration, we could explore further the aesthetics and creativity of Hegel and the *dao*.

It's been an interesting and enlightening experience. Many thanks! I hope we will have many more opportunities to learn from each other.

Until then, farewell!

(I now finish my tea. I hope you have a comparable brew at hand, also.)

BRINCAT: (I will have a stronger refreshment!)

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Endnotes

[1] "It would be as ridiculous," Waltz wrote, "to construct a theory of international politics based on Malaysia and Costa Rica as it would be to construct an economic theory of oligopolistic competition based on the minor firms in a sector of an economy" (Waltz, 1979: 72).

[2] Sources of alienation come from both inside the geocultural West (e.g., environmental activism, the "slow" movement, Occupy Wall Street) as well outside it (e.g., contemporary piracy, spread of organic farming, a "gross happiness index" for economic development).

[3] Daoism has been a philosophical tradition in East, Northeast, and Southeast Asia since the 6th-century BCE. The mythical founder, Laozi, is variously identified as someone who lived in the 6th-century BCE or serves as a composite of historical figures from 5th-4th centuries BCE. Daoism's philosophical twin, Samkhya, dates from a comparable period in South Asia. Kapila, the mythical founder of Samkhya, is listed as having lived around 6th-century BCE as well (http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/311732/Kapila) (Downloaded: 27 February 2012).

[4] For examples, see Plato's *The Republic* or the dialogues of *Phaedrus*, *The Sophist*, *The Statesman*, and *The Philebus*.

[5] These statements are taken from *Vorlesungen über die Philosophie der Religion*, the Lectures of 1827; A. Immediate Religion, or Nature Religion; 1. The Religion of Magic; c. The State Religion of the Chinese Empire and the Dao.

[6] This is most evident where Hegel alleges Daoist symbols are perhaps not Chinese but in fact correlate with the Hebraic tetragram (Hegel, 1995: 560-561).

[7] The 2013 film, "Twelve Years a Slave," makes this point graphically.

[8] It could also be argued that Cheng errs in his conception of sublation, for this term *Aufhebung* is the movement that both overcomes and preserves. In this way, sublation can account for the replication of forms of the *ancien régime* in post-revolutionary societies. As Marx stated, in any historical shift, the "new" society emerges from the womb of the old and is stamped with its birthmarks (see Marx, 1972: 15).

[9] As stated by Hegel, contradiction "is the root of all movement and vitality; it is only insofar as something has a contradiction within it that it moves, has a drive and activity" (Hegel ,1999: note 4, 69).

[10] As a remedy, non-verbal methods like art therapy could intervene helpfully (Soutor 2012).

[11] The term "vast association" as a description of communism appears in the Manifesto (Marx and Engels, 1997: Chapter 2). Elsewhere, Marx and Engels refer to "real community" as the sphere in which "individuals obtain their freedom in and through their association" (Marx and Engels, 1974: Pt 1, Part D). For the "early" Marx, "human emancipation" was said to embody the "genuine resolution" of a true community in association with others (Marx, 1975: 293-305).

[12] I have gone through this elsewhere and do not wish to repeat it here (see Brincat, 2009: 458-463; Williams, 2007: Ch 2; Maker, 2007: Ch 1).

[13] Palm uses the analogy of a two-sided coin for this. Palm writes: "To use the coin example... the two sides are (negatively speaking) inseparable but also form (positively speaking) a unity, i.e. a whole coin. Thus, Hegel uses the term 'unity' in a special sense, which is not equivalent to sameness because it also includes a negative moment" (Palm, 2009: 56).

[14] "A thousand arms and a thousand eyes" refers to the Bodhisattva Avalokitesvara, otherwise known as Guan Yin, the Goddess of Mercy.

[15] The *Daodejing* praises the Authentic Person or *zhen ren* as the highest ideal of self-realization (Coyle, 1998).

[16] Cao wrote the first 80 chapters of HLM, though he freely incorporated comments and notes from family and friends. After his death, a committee of devotées, under the leadership of Gao E, added another 40 chapters.

[17] Indeed, we see this trajectory in Malcolm X's life as he recounted his relationships with white women in his youth and how these led to larger questions about identity, race, and love (X, 1964).

[18] How could Daoist dialectics direct an "inward consciousness" and be "ruled from without" at the same time?

[19] I noted earlier that water exemplifies the *dao* expressly due to the transformative possibilities that inhere within: that is, water can be hot or cold, soft or hard, tranquil or roiling. Consequently, water can destroy as with Typhoon Haiyan in the Philippines. This disaster, however, does not negate the Daoist statement that "water benefits [*shan li*] everything." Indeed, water as an exemplar of the *dao* cannot be limited to one typhoon at one time, or even to all typhoons throughout human history. The notion of water benefitting everything [*wanwu*] refers to the cosmos across time and space. That is, Typhoon Haiyan may devastate the Philippines at this moment in time. This is its *yin* aspect. But we do not know, nor could we anticipate, how Typhoon Haiyan could help the Philippines reconstruct. This is its *yang* aspect. The future, in short, is open.

[20] This is the basis of the Buddhist notion of "co-dependent arising" (*pratitya samutpada*). Nhat (1998) has updated this concept to "interbeing" (*tien hiep*).

[21] For more on *yin/yang* theory in daily life, see Chapters 3, 7, and 8 of Ling (2014).

[22] I explore such possibilities with Daoist dialectics in Chapter 8 of Ling (2014).