FUNDAMENTALS OF COMPARATIVE AND

INTERCULTURAL PHILOSOPHY

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Preprint of the Introduction of:

Fundamentals of Comparative and Intercultural Philosophy (L. Ma and J. van
   Brakel), published by SUNY Press in 2016. ISBN 978-1-4384-6015-4

Leuven
Final manuscript
February 2015

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NOTE ON REFERENCING

In this work, sources are usually referred to in accordance with the author-year system, except that we do not always mention the year of publication if there is only one entry under the author's name in the list of references. Subsequent references to the same work of the same author only give the page number in round brackets. In appropriate cases a work is listed under the year of the first publication of the work in the list of works cited. The publication year of the edition consulted is given after the name of the publisher.

Wittgenstein's writings are referred to by common abbreviations instead of year of publication, for example *PI* for the *Philosophical Investigations*, followed by section number (preceded by §), or, in rare cases, page number. The original German text is taken to be decisive in case of a discrepancy between the English and German text (which are often published together on opposite pages).

We refer to Heidegger's writings by year of composition (or, in rare cases, year of publication), followed by the page number(s) of an English translation (if available) and the page number(s) of the German original (separated by a slash). Citations follow existing translations, but in many cases we have revised them. In case of ambiguity the German text is decisive.

Chinese and Japanese authors are referred to by last name followed by given name(s); other authors usually only by last name. Names of classical Chinese scholars are given in pinyin, followed by simplified characters. On first occurrence, Chinese words or phrases in the main text are given in pinyin (without tone marks), followed by the Chinese character(s). A possible English translation in some contexts may be added in round brackets, but it should be emphasized that this is never more than pointing to a hypothetical family resemblance, which requires further investigations.

In such investigations sometimes we engage, but not always. The Index may give more places where the use and meaning of particular Chinese characters is elucidated. The Chinese character is omitted on subsequent pinyin renderings, unless it is needed to avoid ambiguity (e.g. when two characters have the same pinyin). For citing classical Chinese works we have consulted the *Thesaurus Linguae Sericae* (http://tls.uni-hd.de/). In appropriate cases the original Chinese text of a long citation is given in a note without pinyin transliteration. Unless otherwise mentioned, translations are our own. If a particular translation is cited, it is referred to by the name of the translator. We use simplified characters except in citations from classical sources. In appropriate circumstances we add the traditional character in square brackets after the simplified character.

Usually we do not use quotation marks when mentioning (instead of using) a term or phrase. The difference will be clear from the context, or circumlocutions are used such as: the word philosophy, the expression *zhexue*, and so forth. Unless otherwise noted, emphases in citations are from the original.

In alphabetizing the subject index and list of works cited, articles and particles are overlooked. Hence, for *das Ge-stell* look under G. However, names with prefixes, such as *de*, *da*, *van*, or *von*, are alphabetized under the prefix; for von Humboldt look under V. Adjectives are usually to be found under nouns they modify; for example, for radical translation see translation; radical. Expressions consisting of two nouns are usually listed under the last word. For example, for principle of mutual attunement see under attunement; principle of mutual. Chinese words in the Index are given in pinyin followed by character(s), but no English translation is offered, so as to avoid context-free translation. Names of peoples or languages are listed in the Index using one word; for example: Dinka instead of language; Dinka.

SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

$\rightarrow$ logical implication (IF … THEN)

$\leftrightarrow$ logical equivalence (A$\rightarrow$B AND B$\rightarrow$A)

$\Leftrightarrow$ indicates a relation of family resemblance, "is similar to"

$\exists$ existential quantifier ($\exists x$, there is an *x* such that)

$\in$ is embedded in/among the cluster of

$\neg$ logical negation (NOT)

$\wedge$ logical disjunction (OR)

$\vee$ logical conjunction (AND)

BCT, BCTs	Basic Colour Term(s)
CTP	*Chinese Text Project* (http://ctext.org/)
CS, CS's	conceptual scheme(s)
CS $\{C_n\}$, CS $\{E_n\}$	a meaningful collection of FR-concepts
FR-concept	family resemblance concept
FR-extension	extending FR-concepts across languages and traditions
FR(C), FR(E)	a particular Chinese/ English FR-concept
FR(C_n), FR(E_n)	a number of Chinese/ English FR-concepts
FR(ΣC_n), FR(ΣE_n)	a hybrid concept, the "sum" or "average" of a number of concepts
meta-CS	meta-conceptual-scheme
NNSSL	no need to speak the same language
PC	principle of charity
PH	principle of humanity

TLS	*Thesaurus Linguae Sericae* (http://tls.uni-hd.de/)
X, Y, Z	variables for a tradition, a text, or an individual
Z_i, Z_j, Z_k	variables for a group of philosophers
XYZ-model	minimalistic model of the holism of interpretation

INTRODUCTION

The title of this book is "Fundamentals of Comparative and Intercultural Philosophy,"
but yet we often solely use the expression "intercultural philosophy" in a broad scope,
including every intercultural philosophical activity that involves translation,
interpretation, and exposition of the conceptual schemes of a certain philosophical
tradition in terms of the conceptual schemes of another tradition. Sometimes, we
shorten this long phrase to "cross-cultural interpretation" or "interpretation across
traditions." Because intercultural and comparative have different semantic fields in
philosophy, we use both in the title. However, except for a few cases,[i] we use the
phrase intercultural philosophy to *include* comparative philosophy. In terms of
"fundamentals" in the title, this book is concerned primarily with the necessary
preconditions of intercultural philosophy. Occasionally we address the methodology
of intercultural philosophy, but this is not our main subject. "Necessary
preconditions" is more fundamental than "methodology."

Consider two philosophical traditions, say X and Y, associated with or embedded
in different cultural and historical backgrounds (forms of life). These traditions come
into contact or are brought into contact with one another. Then one may distinguish
between the following situations, among others:

1. Texts from tradition X are translated and interpreted in the language and
   conceptual schemes of the other tradition Y. This includes, for example,
   translating classical Chinese texts into modern Chinese (which involves implicit
   reference to modern Western conceptual schemes).

2. A philosopher from tradition X is influenced by (translations of) writings from
   tradition Y, to the extent of "borrowing" from Y.

3. Contemporary philosophers from traditions X and Y engage in intercultural

philosophical dialogue, often focusing on writings from one tradition, say classical Chinese texts.

4. A philosopher Z studies both X and Y and is making comparisons (expressed in the language of Z), sometimes by imagining a virtual intercultural philosophical dialogue between X and Y (making X and Y speak the language of Z).[ii]

5. Ideas from tradition X are presented to tradition Y (and perhaps other traditions) with the aim of contributing (together) to one global (universal) philosophical enterprise.

6. Arguments are put forward by Z to the effect that X and Y (and other traditions) are to be integrated into one world philosophy (in the language of Z).

The above complex situations constitute our starting point in excavating the fundamentals of understanding across philosophical traditions. In particular we are interested in philosophical practices that involve at least two different traditions that share no common heritage and whose languages have very different grammatical structure, such as Indo-Germanic languages and classical Chinese.

To reach the most fundamental preconditions, we often focus on the primordial stages of interpretation. We do not start with highlighting the problematics of how to translate poetry or abstract philosophical texts across traditions, since in such cases it is presupposed that the translator already has a thorough knowledge of the language to be translated. We focus on the necessary preconditions that make possible understanding a strange language by starting from the situation of radical translation or interpretation, when nothing specific is yet known concerning the other language and no interpreters are yet available.

This book tackles with the necessary and *not-so-necessary* preconditions of intercultural philosophy. We add the phrase not-so-necessary preconditions, because

it is often assumed that there exist a considerable number of human universals (concepts and behaviors shared among all humans, philosophical issues shared among all human traditions), which would be indispensable to make communicative interaction between languages and traditions possible. Through several chapters we will show that these often assumed universals are highly disputable as far as empirical evidence is concerned, and cannot serve as *necessary* conditions for interpretation across (philosophical) traditions. Other not-so-necessary preconditions include the ideal language assumption (typical for analytic philosophy) and the requirement of sharing a common or in-between language for interpretation to be successful (typical for the hermeneutic tradition). Dropping these three not-so-necessary conditions allow us to dissolve the "either universalism or relativism" dichotomy.

The phrase "necessary conditions of possibility" derives from Kant's famous transcendental deduction.[iii] According to Kant, we have [i] sensory experiences, [ii] knowledge of objects, [iii] moral judgments. How is this possible? What are necessary conditions for having those experiences? Kant suggested three types of preconditions: [i] space and time, [ii] twelve categories, of cause-effect, existence, negation, and so on, [iii] categorical imperative. The transcendental approach can be extended to include almost anything: sensory experience, aesthetic judgment, mathematical knowledge, language, meaningful interaction between people, and so on. Through explaining what makes the experience of a givenness possible, one sets out the transcendental ground, that is, the necessary preconditions for having such experiences.

The transcendental argument has been employed as a typical conceptual tool in continental philosophy. Husserl, Heidegger, Habermas, and other continental philosophers have been called transcendental philosophers. Since Strawson,

transcendental arguments are also employed explicitly in analytic philosophy, although the word "transcendental" is not always used; instead one may speak of (pre)conditions of possibility. Specific concepts that are introduced when specifying conditions of possibility may be called transcendental concepts, for example Husserl's transcendental subjectivity, Gadamer's *Wirkungsgeschichte* ("the history of a text as an effective agent"), the notions of *Lebenswelt* and *Lebensform* (lifeworld and life-form to be discussed in chapter 6), and Davidson's principle of charity (to be discussed in chapter 10).[iv]

Originally there is a strict distinction between the a posteriori *given* (experience) and the a priori transcendental objects or conditions of possibility (for example Kant's categories). Our use of this method differs from the standard transcendental approach in that we historicize and pragmaticize the conditions of possibility. When the conditions of possibility are historicized, both a priori considerations and empirical data are relevant and the formulation of the conditions of possibility is relative to the language(s) and conceptual schemes involved.

This book focuses on two questions as guidelines:

1. What are the necessary and "not-so-necessary" preconditions for interpretation, comparison, or other interaction across philosophical traditions to be possible?

2. How can one speak meaningfully about "similarities and differences" in this context?

The rhetoric of "similarities and differences" has been commonly voiced in relevant literature. However, such rhetoric is problematic, in particular because the meaning of the phrase "similarities and differences" is assumed to be self-evident. For instance, in a review of the *Encyclopedia of Chinese Philosophy* (Cua 2003), Tan Sor-hoon (2005) says the key methodological issue in comparative philosophy is how to deal

with similarities and differences (117) and concludes stressing "the importance of finding an appropriate balance between similarities and differences" (118). However, nowhere are the problematics of the necessary preconditions of translation or interpretation across traditions ever mentioned. In two otherwise interesting recent books on comparative philosophy, the meaning of "similarities and differences" is also taken to be self-evident. This is reflected in such statements as: "It is as difficult to compare philosophical traditions well without reference to a critically refined comparative method as it is to develop such a method without an adequate awareness of the similarities and differences among philosophical traditions" (Smid 2009: 3). "Comparative philosophy should focus on two things: similarities and differences between different ways of thinking" (Burik 2009: 4). Nothing much is said as to how the phrase "similarities and differences" is to be understood.

When the notion of "similarities and differences" is taken for granted, an ideal language that has universal applicability and validity is also taken for granted to express these similarities and differences. Instead of implicitly assuming an ideal language, we argue for a pragmatic Wittgenstein-inspired understanding of language and for family resemblance of the referents of general terms both within and across traditions. In order for interpretation across traditions to be possible and to dissolve the universalism vs. relativism dichotomy, it *must* be presupposed that *all* concepts in *all* traditions are family resemblance concepts. Necessary preconditions for interpretation across traditions to be possible further include the assumption that the other is a human being and the *necessity* to assume that the other person is *usually* (but not always) sincere and saying what is correct (according to the standards of the interpreter).

As yet there has not appeared much focused work on the preconditions of intercultural philosophy. Between us we share knowledge of analytic, continental, and Chinese philosophy. This allows us to cover a wide range of issues, and set up a number of "path marks" whence one can look for the "ingredients" of these preconditions for interpretation. We also try to integrate these ingredients with a view toward developing them into a consistent series of accounts, which together constitute a theory of interpretation focusing on necessary and not-so-necessary conditions for interpretation across philosophical traditions.

Because Western languages and classical Chinese are unrelated languages embedded in unrelated traditions (cultures, forms of life) and both have a long written tradition, we agree with A.C. Graham (1989: 389) and Joseph Needham (2004: 89) that classical Chinese is the best test case for the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis of linguistic relativism. Therefore, most of our examples and case studies are taken from the Chinese traditions (in comparison with modern philosophical language and concepts). We do not claim that our case studies are correct in every detail. It is sufficient human beings may have the practices mentioned in the case studies. Therefore, our case studies can be considered thought experiments. A general theory should be able to deal with them. We focus on philosophy, in particular in the case studies. However, our theory of interpretation is applicable to every form of cross-cultural interpretation.

In the remaining part of this introduction we present an overview of all the chapters. In the first chapter, we provide preliminary explications concerning the central concepts of philosophy and language and introduce the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis of linguistic relativism. After reviewing a number of views with respect to Western, Chinese, and African philosophy, we argue that philosophy is a family resemblance concept. Interaction across traditions does not require that the two sides

employ the same concept of philosophy. Similarly, no sharp boundaries between "philosophy" and other reflective practices are needed; partitions such as those between philosophy, history, religious studies, and literature are conventional, and classifications may be different, as in the history of the Chinese traditions.

Such notions as language (games), communication, understanding, interpretation, explanation, description, translation, dialogue, and comparison are closely related. We propose to use a broad notion of language, including various forms of nonlinguistic signs. We assume that all language uses concepts, though concepts should not be understood as having essentialistic definitions. The unsayable is also communicated in terms of language and hence concepts. Speaking of nonconceptual thought or language only means that one opposes the assumptions underlying an ideal language with precise meanings.

The Sapir-Whorf hypothesis (that is, the thesis that language guides and constrains thought) may be the most often discussed theoretical issue in intercultural studies. A crucial test of the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis may not be possible. We support this insight with two case studies. First we discuss Derrida's critique of Benveniste and then we review a discussion concerning the *Minglitan* 名理探, a translation of Aristotle's *Categoriae* (in Latin with scholastic commentaries) into seventeenth century Chinese. Language guides and constrains thinking, but this is not absolute. The development of language and thinking (associated with a particular tradition) is open-ended.

In Chapter 2, three major representatives of the ideal language paradigm are critically reviewed. The first variant embraces an ideal language in the narrow sense. In addition to presupposing the universality of first-order predicate logic, it assumes that words can and should have precise meanings and philosophers should work

toward this goal. The second variant takes for granted a large number of cognitive, philosophical, and other universals, shared by all human beings. The third representative requires a shared or in-between language as a necessary precondition to make interpretation across history and traditions possible. The first and the third variant are characteristic of analytic and continental philosophy respectively. Cognitive scientists propagate the second variant. Numerous philosophers addressing the issue of translation or interpretation across traditions favor the ideal language paradigm under one of its guises. A list of such philosophers includes "big names" in the Western traditions such as Aristotle, Leibniz, Frege, Merleau-Ponty, Habermas, and Gadamer. No philosopher can be completely free from the ideal language paradigm. Our alternative is presented in chapters 4 and 5.

The major not-so-necessary precondition for interpretation is that there is no need for universals, except for biological universals, such as the fact that all ("normal") human beings have the same discriminatory capacities.[v] However, the biological facts allow for numerous conceptual schemes and very different languages. Instead of espousing universals, we propose the notion of quasi-universal. Quasi-universals are working hypotheses that connect conceptual schemes from a limited number of traditions. They fulfill a necessary role in interpretative practice. A quasi-universal connecting, for example, modern English and modern Chinese has two sides, in English and Chinese respectively.

Chapter 2 contains three case studies: one on machine translation that illustrates the failure of the ideal language project in one particular application; one on the methodological pitfalls when trying to establish a small set of basic emotions as universally shared, recognized, and labeled across humanity; and one case study

concerning logic. It is allright to assume "standard" logic in all interpretative practice, but the interpreter has to be prepared for unexpected exceptions.

Chapter 3 starts with a review of a number of definitions of universalism, relativism, and related "isms." Our own position is different from all the others in the following respects:

1. We hold that all concepts are family resemblance concepts, both within and across traditions. This view is further elaborated in chapter 4.

2. We suggest that one is always thinking and acting with numerous (possibly incommensurable) conceptual schemes at the same time. Similarly, one is always participating in numerous forms of life at the same time. These features are elaborated in chapter 6.

Then we show that the ideal language assumption is shared by universalist and relativist alike (as these terms are most commonly understood) and discuss the often-stated claim that relativism is self-refuting.

In chapter 3 we also present a detailed case study of the suggestion that there is empirical evidence for a small number of basic color terms, which are potentially the same for all languages and traditions. The case study illustrates that the methodology of empirical research aiming at discovering human universals is disputable. Therefore lists of human universals cannot be trusted. The case study of basic color terms also shows that the typical relativist is a universalist at one remove. The relativist argues that different languages divide the color spectrum differently, but in saying this, the relativist still presupposes the universality of COLOR.[vi] Furthermore, the case study is an example of the regimentation of peripheral languages by the dominant language(s) of the center. The significance of the latter phenomena for intercultural philosophy is addressed in general terms in chapter 8.

In the last section of chapter 3, we argue for the priority of the manifest image over that of the scientific image. The justification of science and its methods is, in the end, not grounded in science but in the manifest life-forms of human traditions. Like sciences, intercultural philosophy should be built on the quasi-universals of common sense. We present a provisional description of the levels of common sense (following Husserl), while disclaiming that the concepts used in the formulation are universals.

Instead of committing ourselves to the ideal language assumption in the narrow sense, or presupposing the necessity of a shared or in-between language, or postulating numerous substantial universals, in chapter 4, we put forward the FR-principle: *all* general concepts are family-resemblance-concepts (henceforth: FR-concepts). FR-concepts have no essences (or "cores"), no strict borders. This holds for concepts at all levels: everyday concepts such as green and *qing* 青, philosophical concepts such as emotion(s) and *qing* 情, philosophical categories such as form(s) of life and *dao* 道, and meta-concepts such as thing and *wu* 物.

The notion of family resemblance with respect to concepts derives from Wittgenstein. We extend Wittgenstein's notion of family resemblance meanings to (the referents of) all general terms and to interpretation across traditions. FR-concepts include concepts introduced by ostensive definitions. When concepts are *stipulated* to be exact and precise, the stipulation itself still *employs* FR-concepts. Furthermore, concepts and their language games can be connected by family resemblances across languages and traditions. The principle of family resemblance allows us to be more universalistic than a universalist, because it makes the most culturally specific notions accessible by extension of the interpreter's FR-concepts. It also allows us to be more relativistic than a relativist, because it allows, for example, not only color

classifications to be different across traditions, but it also allows the notion of color not to be a universal.

Chapter 4 contains case studies concerning the family resemblances of *game*, *Spiel*, and *youxi* 游戏; concerning the varieties of anger and its congeners across traditions; and concerning the de-essentialization of knowledge.

In chapter 5 we discuss the possibility, desirability, and necessity of the principle "No Need to Speak the Same Language" (NNSSL) The FR-principle achieves de-essentialization of language and henceforth follows the NNSSL-principle. First contacts (first encounters) are discussed as case studies. They illustrate the basic features of cross-cultural interpretation. The account of first contacts will be used as a heuristic for the model of interpretation to be presented in chapter 9. In addition, there is a case study concerning the Waitangi treaty and another one concerning Davidson's provocative thesis that "there is no such thing as a language." In the last section of chapter 5, we consider in what way the notion of a shared world is to be understood in (philosophical) interpretation across traditions.

The NNSSL-principle applies to every form of intercultural philosophy and, more generally, every form of cross-cultural interpretation. Ideally, on the NNSSL-stance, all participants in an exchange or negotiation should speak the language of their choice. This would require that each participant understands the language(s) spoken by others. In practice this may not be possible, but this does not change the relevance of the NNSSL-principle. In excluding a language, a background of alternative ideas, principles, and future possibilities is removed from the common (multilingual) discourse.

When applied to interpretation across traditions, adherence to the NNSSL-principle means that, ideally, the results of investigations in intercultural philosophy should be

reported in at least two unrelated languages. The NNSSL-principle aims to dispel the misguided suggestion that the community of contemporary philosophers should work together toward one ideal language suitable for its interpretative purposes or aim for an implicit agreement to communicate in one shared dominant (world) language.

In chapter 6 we present an innovative understanding of the central notions of conceptual schemes and form(s) of life, both of which are to be understood as FR-concepts. These explorations substantiate the notion of (philosophical) tradition and the latter's heterogeneity. Adherence to particular conceptual schemes is ultimately grounded in the human form(s) of life and their language games. People use indefinite manifolds of conceptual schemes simultaneously and participate in manifolds of forms of life; manifolds that can neither be described nor formalized in their totality. To judge the significance of a particular conceptual scheme or compare two conceptual schemes, a third conceptual scheme is needed. Each right scheme must fit "a world," but each utterance about this world is a co-production of numerous schemes. Speaking about similarities and differences is *always* relative to *numerous* conceptual schemes.

The notion of form(s) of life is derived from Wittgenstein. We extend this notion considerably further to the situation of interpretation across traditions, arguing that "form(s) of life" should be understood in the singular and the plural at the same time. Form(s) of life should be taken to be empirical *as well as* transcendental grounding, to serve as moral *and* cognitive basis for everything else, and to possess universal *as well as* local range.

An understanding of similarities and differences is developed on the basis of Wittgenstein's notions of family resemblance and form(s) of life. What is similar is what is seen to be similar in mutually recognizable human practices. What human

beings share are broadly similar responses to a diversity of forms of life. It is a necessary requirement for interpretation that these similarities appear to be there. There is family resemblance of forms of life and of conceptual schemes across traditions, but what is seen as similar will be different in different traditions. What is similar in human practices and associated conceptual schemes is what human beings would recognize as similar in first or other contacts; a similarity that is, in a way, transcendentally grounded, but the content of this grounding remains tied to the local situation of (potentially actual) encounters between you's and me's. To be a human person, it is both an empirical and a transcendental precondition that one knows the certainties of particular forms of life *and* that one is capable of recognizing and dealing with an indefinite variety of human behaviors and practices.

Chapter 6 contains a case study concerning the so-called "mass noun hypothesis" for classical Chinese. It illustrates the possibility of fundamental differences across traditions at the highest level of meta-conceptual-schemes. Similarities may yet be observed using a third meta-conceptual-scheme.

Chapter 7 begins with illustrating the variety of situations in which interpretation of texts from one tradition in terms of the conceptual schemes of another tradition occurs. No matter which two traditions are involved, interpretation will use the *geyi* 格义 method in the general sense of interpreting conceptual schemes of an unfamiliar tradition (*yi*) in terms of the conceptual schemes the interpreter is more familiar with (*ge*). One should not think of the standard (*ge*) as something fixed; for example it may change as a result of clarifying *yi*.

In this chapter we also present a critical review of various forms of comparative philosophy, of world philosophy, and of intercultural philosophy, as well as various understandings of ethnophilosophy, thus indicating our position in the general field of

intercultural philosophy. Different authors formulate different goals for intercultural philosophy, but two general trends are discernible: the allegedly value-free and detached scientific approaches on the one hand and on the other hand hermeneutic approaches focusing on dialogue and understanding. Our goal is to investigate the necessary preconditions of intercultural philosophy, which is relevant no matter which goal of intercultural, comparative, or world philosophy one is committed to.

In chapter 8 we argue that the current epoch of globalization and the ensuing regimentation of the languages of the world relative to the dominant language(s) of the center, is in the process of drastically undermining the possibility of interpreting texts from ancient traditions. To put it in a succinct way: "Globalization makes the past inaccessible." This may be considered to be a de facto necessary constraint on interpreting whatever premodern text or tradition. One important cause why there seem to be more (quasi-)universals than there actually are, is the presence of center-periphery forces operative in recent history (due to colonization, the spread of modern science and technology, and other globalization forces). It is these center-periphery forces, rather than the alleged problem of incommensurability, that constitutes the major hurdle for accessing ancient texts. What Heidegger called "planetarization" is a form of hermeneutic relativity that will prove more and more difficult to overcome.

We illustrate the so-called transcendental pretence, the global regimentation of languages, and the increasing inaccessibility of the past by a number of case studies; one concerning the Bantu notion *ubuntu* and one concerning the Chinese oracle bone inscriptions referring to "cattle fur appearances." In addition there are detailed case studies concerning *qing* 情 (emotions? reality input?) and the verb "to be." We show that studies correlating various functions of "to be" in the Western traditions with specific words in classical Chinese, together with the impossibility of translating

Western philosophical works into modern Chinese without using neologisms, show conclusively that "to be" is not a universal across traditions. However, for the different functions of "to be," rather straightforward quasi-universals (extensions of FR-concepts across traditions) may be possible.

After reviewing theories of translation and interpretation of Quine, Davidson, Habermas, Gadamer, and others, we introduce in chapters 9 a model of interpretation applicable to all variants of intercultural philosophy, drawing on resources from continental, analytic, and Chinese philosophy. The main feature of theories of interpretation and our model in particular, is that reflection shows that one is never interpreting one thing at a time (such as a meaning, a belief, a poem, an epistemic virtue, a practice, a behavior). One is always interpreting abundant things at the same time. In consequence, an interpretation is highly underdetermined by "the data." Ascription of meanings, beliefs, concepts, motivations, joint awareness, emotion(s), logical principles, and so on go together in the process of interpretation. Every particular interpretation depends on innumerable other interpretations, every particular one of which can be wrong, but many have to be right. Every interpretation is relative to a context or background that cannot be described completely.

The notion of hermeneutic circle is often introduced in the literature with reference to the whole and the parts, but this is too simplistic. There exist *numerous* hermeneutic circles. There is holism all over the place; between different parts, between parts and wholes taken at different levels (passage, work, corpus, embedding forms of life). There are hermeneutic circles within and between the understanding of the necessary preconditions and constraints for interpretation. In addition, there is hermeneutic relativity: pre-conceptions (pre-judices) are subject to change but the background of each interpreter cannot be eliminated completely.[vii]

The indeterminacy of reference and the indeterminacy of translation are theoretical variants of underdetermination. Then there is the more common underdetermination of an interpretation by the data such as incomplete sources and choice of texts. There is underdetermination due to commitment to particular epistemic virtues as well. Therefore, due to unavoidable hermeneutic relativity and an indefinite number of hermeneutic circles, interpretation requires constraints to restrain underdetermination.

Chapter 9 contains a case study concerning Gongsun Long's thesis "white-horse not horse." It illustrates the holism of interpreting meanings, motivations, and embedment among contemporary traditions at the same time.

Chapter 10 presents the remaining necessary preconditions for interpretation. In addition to the FR-principle, the NNSSL-principle, and the constraints due to the regimentation of languages in the globalized world, three more necessary preconditions for interpretation can be identified. Family resemblance between forms of life (traditions) must be presupposed, supervening on the facts that the other is a human being, living in communities and having a learnable language. The latter may be called the attitude-toward-a-soul principle (already introduced in chapter 5), which underlies the similarity of mutually recognizable human practices. Specific (human) universals need not be presupposed. Quasi-universals suffice. The first access to unfamiliar conceptual schemes is via FR-extension of conceptual schemes of the interpreter. The projection of quasi-universals cannot be avoided.

Furthermore, some sort of principle of mutual attunement (in a large number of cases) has to be presupposed. In the radical (primordial) stage of linguistic interpretation this principle is somewhat like Davidson's principle of charity. Only on the basis of assuming that the speaker or author is sincere and right on the whole (by the standards of the interpreter) is it possible to ascribe to her or him logical,

epistemic, or deontic error.[viii] In subsequent (more pragmatic) stages of interpretation, the principle will resemble the principle of humanity: like the principle of charity but now according to the standards of the other. Almost all literature considers the principles of charity and humanity to be an either/or choice; this is mistaken. Something like the principle of charity and something like the principle of humanity both play a role in subsequent stages of linguistic interpretation.

Finally, whether one likes it or not, the interpreter(s) have to assume epistemic virtues, which exemplify the two epistemic metavirtues of fitting in with experience and fitting in with other knowledge (including other interpretations). Specification of epistemic virtues varies among interpreters and across traditions. The choice of epistemic virtues and in particular the "balancing" of different epistemic virtues is a factor contributing to underdetermination that is often overlooked (because each interpreter believes that his or her favored epistemic virtues are "obvious").

Chapter 10 contains a substantial case study of the (alleged) universality of the "is true" predicate. Among other things, this case study illustrates that the necessary preconditions for interpretation may have to be reformulated as interpretation proceeds. For example, the principle of mutual attunement and the epistemic virtues may have to be re-formulated without using the word "true."

In a brief conclusion we summarize our answers to the leading questions: What are the necessary and not-so-necessary preconditions for interpretation across philosophical traditions? How can one speak meaningfully about similarities and differences in intercultural philosophy?

We sincerely thank reviewers of our earlier publications, on which this book is built, and in particular the readers for the press who raised a number of substantial issues and pointed out a number of errors. We acknowledge responsibility for all

remaining errors. However, errors of detail should not undermine the overall picture we sketch concerning the necessary preconditions for interpretation across languages and traditions.

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[i] We may use the words compare or comparative when the author(s) whose work is discussed use such words. We will use the words intercultural and cross-cultural as synonyms.

[ii] Referring to philosopher Z includes the possibility that one of the two parties (or both) may claim to take the role of Z as well.

[iii] "I entitle *transcendental* all knowledge which is occupied not so much with objects as with the mode of our knowledge of objects insofar as this mode of knowledge is to be possible *a priori*. A system of such concepts might be entitled transcendental philosophy" (Kant 1787: B25).

[iv] Examples of (alleged) possibility arguments include: Other people often behave as I do. How is this possible? They *are* people just like me. Science is extremely successful in making predictions. How is this possible? Science comes closer and closer to a description of how the world is like in itself (here "world" is a transcendental concept).

[v] At a high level of abstraction even biological universals may be considered socially constructed. For example, feminists have pointed out that the sex feature of human beings is a socially constructed concept.

[vi] On the use of small capitals see note **Error! Bookmark not defined.** of chapter 2.

[vii] Hence, interpretation "is grounded in *something we grasp in advance—in a fore-conception*" (Heidegger 1927: 223/191).

[viii] In referring to the author of a text, the word "author" should be understood as "author or authors." When we refer to the speaker of a language, this includes the writing of the speakers.