CHAPTER NINE

Translating Friendship Alternatively through Disciplines, Epochs and Cultures

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Traditional notions of translation (T_N or 'narrow translation') have had a primary focus on text translation and how meaning can be preserved. This chapter employs an alternative semiotic understanding of translation (T_S or 'semiotic translation'), as suggested by Kobus Marais, to demonstrate how it can be used to study inter-epoch changes in norm-directed practices and their conceptualizations, cross-cultural developments and interdisciplinary translations of concepts used to describe them. Friendship practices and their theoretical descriptions are used as a case to show the need for alternative understandings of translation processes. T_S occurs not only when texts are taken as signs of complex phenomena but also when a mode of life and the sociolinguistic practice of one generation or culture is interpreted and changed by its inheritors. To develop T_S as a general and theoretically more satisfying model, we investigate some of the processes involved in the inter-epoch conceptualizations and cross-cultural developments of friendship. Claiming that different friendship studies all contribute to knowledge of some aspects of 'the same' phenomenon demands the possibility of translations of 'friendship' as a word, concept, practice, interpersonal relationship, social bond, ideal, form of love, normative constraint, power relation or any other terms that have been used to characterize its phenomenology and dynamics. Analysing T_S translations of friendship across epochs (from Confucius and Aristotle through the following eras, up to modernity), cultures (worldwide) and languages demonstrates how the perspective of T_S helps us grasp ancient texts, their translations and cross-cultural friendship performances better without forcing upon the material our late-modern perspectives and norms. It is suggested that frames (from artificial intelligence and philosophy of science) can be an analytic tool for studying T_S processes. Finally, some challenges to be resolved in further research are outlined.

> *Goods of commensurate worth and utility were thus simultaneously exchanged … They fulfilled a psychological need, the need to translate every state or quality into a symbol.*
>
> – Gabriel Herman[1]

PRELUDE

I'm happy to have friends I see and interact with. Some of them I've known for a long time, and have followed their doings and lives over decades. A few of them are very close; they're persons I think I know well — their idiosyncrasies, weaknesses, strengths – and I know they, too, know my strengths and vulnerabilities, but are seldom judgemental about my faults. I sense they respect and care for me, just as I respect and care for them. Exchanging stories, frustrations and rumours, sharing experiences, discussing viewpoints – in this river of interpretations I translate their actions and messages, sense how they see things, and I'm prompted to reflect on what I like or dislike, and how I would have reacted in this or that situation. Any interpretation is also a translation, and not just because of etymology (the Latin *interpretari* means 'explain, translate'). Whenever I address a friend, I translate my question into their world, of which I know a part. I may slant certain facts, give hints I know they know how to decode and, within these shared exchanges, we slowly translate and retranslate each other's experiences.

Where did this kind of friendship come from? How did I learn it? Could the 'I' in this story have belonged to any culture, any time? Is 'friendship' just a reification of a very fuzzy type of relationship that can never be put into a single formula, or is it possible to trace some translations of this relational mode, not only in my own life but since the very beginning – and yes, let's talk about origins – say, when we, hardly yet humans, were supposed to have descended from the trees to walk out on a dusty savanna, to begin a social existence of a new kind, slowly building up more civic societies in different parts of the world? Is there a general story of friendship to be told, translated and retranslated many times? How can such translations of one form into another actually become comprehended as a part of the whole story?

INTRODUCTION

The aim here is more to pose questions about different perspectives of translation than to settle them as answers, and the cases used are meant to focus the discussion. From the general point of view of semiotics, *translation* is a relational set of mediational processes of transferring, interpreting, transforming and preserving (to various degrees and in various modes) meaning through systems of signs; such processes of sign action and interpretation are often referred to as *semiosis* (Peirce CP 5.484[2]). From this broad perspective, it is easy to see why a more vernacular sense of translation (sometimes called 'translation proper', but here called 'narrow translation', T_N) only involves a meaning-preserving interlingual transformation of a message (as a text in one language transformed into another text with the same meaning in another language), which is 'narrow' and cannot stand alone: Even 'traditional' interlingual text translation can only be understood in all its troubled and intricate details as being part of semiotic processes that are embedded, enculturated and embodied in and often across patterns of sociocultural space-time that add more complexity to the dynamics of translational semiosis than implied by an everyday understanding of T_N. This broader semiotic perspective on translation (*generalized translation* semiotically construed, as a technical term, 'semiotic translation', T_S) opens inquiries into alternative forms of translational semiosis that takes place in parallel with, and often directly interacts with, processes of interlingual text translation.[3]

Thus, understanding T_N demands detailed investigations of T_S. For instance, when novels are retranslated, as when a Danish publishing house, in 2019, issued a new

translation of *Il Decamerone* (completed by Boccaccio in 1353; first translated to Danish in 1904), it is not only because the Danish language has changed but also because what we vaguely call 'Danish culture' (ways of living, interacting, working, talking, thinking, loving, caring) slowly alters as new generations of readers make their entrance. A new generation's inheritance of a culture from previous generations is an instance of T_S or interpretation and change of the interconnected web of linguistic and cultural practices. Hence, updated versions of novels, movies and plays are not just a product of T_N or linguistic updates but of all the processes involved in T_S. They are part of the social mechanisms by which a new generation inherits and transforms a cultural landscape, and lets itself be influenced by other cultures. When a digital publishing company that supplies educational material introduces *The Decameron* to new readers, one of its stories of love and friendship is presented like this: 'The story of Alessandro and the Abbot is a gender-identity bending version of friends with benefits. If you take a close look at the language here, you might guess that the Abbot's admiration is teetering on the threshold of erotic appraisal. Stay tuned.'[4] Mediation and interpretation go hand in hand in this translation of a love relationship in a literary work from 1353 into a contemporary frame, using a category for a purportedly 'new' form of friendship (one with sexual benefits[5]) to catch the interests of contemporary readers, by offering a label known by this target group to decode a fragment of meaning in a novel not to be dismissed as arcane (a concern more important for the publisher, than academics' concern about the labelling's historical presentism).

Such examples are far from unique and raise a general question we will pursue: Is it possible to develop models of alternative translation of not only our language-mediated descriptions of 'something' (here we use relationship practices of friendship as our case) but also some of the ways in which that something is translated (in the broader semiotic sense, T_S) across cultures and epochs? Some phenomena denoted by words in a language may be especially adequate for being subjected to such an analysis: Words for concepts that are not only *descriptive* of actually existing phenomena (*cf.* Peirce's ontological category of secondness) but also *normative* as representing a norm or ideal for what the concept denotes (thus instantiating thirdness) and, thus, for how such an entity, process or idea ought to be realized within a given situation. The word 'state' denoting an organized political community under a government with a set of institutions is not just a descriptive term for a territory or nation, it is also a normative term implied by the idea that we can have 'strong' states as well as 'failed' states (that do not live up to the ideal set by the concept). Our attempts to compare and distinguish good and bad forms of governance date back to, at least, the works in political philosophy by Plato and Aristotle. The word 'friendship' (as well as words for other relationship types) has the same character. The norms implied by such words can change with the sociocultural evolution of societies. It is disputed whether there is a common core of meaning behind ancient friendship forms and modern friendship, or across friendship as conceived of in Western societies in contrast to traditional Asian, African, Pacific or native American practices of friendship – and whether and to what extent the terms for friendship(-like relationships) in various languages are translatable across epochs and cultures without a significant loss of meaning. These disputes align with different stances and positions within translation studies regarding the translatability of various entities (like ideas, cultures, systems of belief, identities). Neither strong universalist positions (claiming meanings to be universal units across cultures and languages) nor strong relativist positions (like a culturalist meaning holism maintaining a low or absent translatability of certain things) will be defended here, and

debates within the field have shown this dichotomy between universalism and relativism to be too simplified. We will rather opt for an alternative and empirically open position, which allows for something to be lost in translation, something to be kept and something new to be created via translational processes. This suggests that a closer study based on cases of the semiosis of T_S (embedded in intercultural communication and inter-epoch inheritance and interpretation) would give a more nuanced view, and allow for different cases to be located at different places in the continuum between ultra-relativism and ultra-universalism.[6]

We will first try to schematize the question of alternative translation within the human sphere (we do not dwell on its biosemiotic dimensions) in its totality across epochs and cultures, to create a map of transformations via T_S that are relevant for friendship as a word, a phenomenon, a practice and an idea. Then, we will give examples of ways of filling out this scheme by exploring some of the research that has been done on the history, philosophy, anthropology, sociology (etc.) of friendship, and, finally, we will discuss the benefits and limitations of an expanded notion of translation for grasping friendship through 'big' (historical) time and (cultural) space.

FRAMEWORK: SCHEMATIZING THE COMPLEXITY OF ALTERNATIVE TRANSLATION

To help imagining broader alternative senses of translation as informed by semiotics (especially in the tradition of Peirce, *cf.* Stjernfelt 2007; 2014; Marais 2019), we can schematize the contrast between T_N and T_S by a few simple diagrams (Figures 9.1, 9.2 and 9.3).

Though it is a simplification to posit a single 'traditional understanding of translation' as being purely interlinguistic in the sense of T_N (Figure 9.1), we will not go into detail in outlining the historical complexity of different translation practices within different traditions, but simply emphasize that the semiotic understanding of translation (T_S) represents an expanded alternative. From the perspective of translation studies, one may conceive of T_N and T_S as end points of a continuum between a series of narrow and broader concepts of translation. From a Peircean semiotic perspective, the problem with T_N is that this notion tends to abstract away the complex semiotic character of all translational processes, as if texts could exist in isolation – or as inputs to a formal process

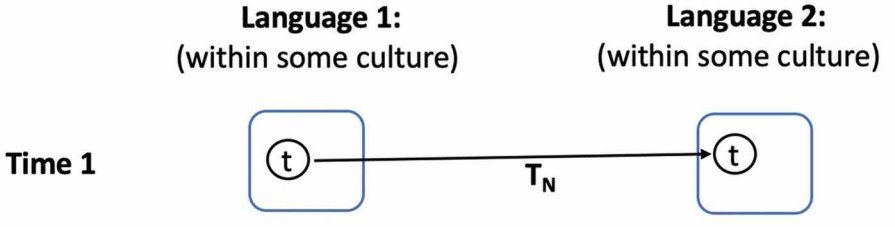

FIGURE 9.1 Schematic representation of T_N, translation in the narrow sense. Here is a high focus on the two languages in which the meaning of the translated text (t) is attempted to be preserved by the translation, but little focus is on the differences and similarities in the dynamics of cultural practices (symbolized by the rounded rectangles) in which the two texts come to exist.

of machine translation. This simplistic understanding of translation (Figure 9.2a) can be contrasted with a semiotic understanding (Figure 9.2b) that emphasizes the relational and basic triadic nature of any sign – in particular texts as complex signs – that do not develop as isolated representations, but are rather composite *representamens* that stand in irreducible triadic relations with both the signified *objects* (like human practices or other phenomena) and their *interpretants* understood as their actual or conceivable effects (*cf.* Peirce 1931–1958). Figure 9.2b is a pedagogical simplification, for even though the middle arrow stands for translation processes, the very process of interpreting any single sign, thought, action or conduct involves translational processes (Marais 2019: Chapter 4).

If the signified phenomenon is friendship, it is important to remember that, in the Peircean conception of the sign, triadic sign relations can be instantiated by something outside language, such as actions, perceptions, habits or feelings. Thus, in a translation (p_0 ····> p_1) of friendship habits or norms from one context to another, the sign carrier (or representamen) t_0 does not have to be a text, but could be any other sign of such an interpersonal relation.

As Marais (2019) indicates, exemplified below with the case of friendship studies, the semiotic perspective opens to alternative fields of study, alternative times, spaces, cultures,

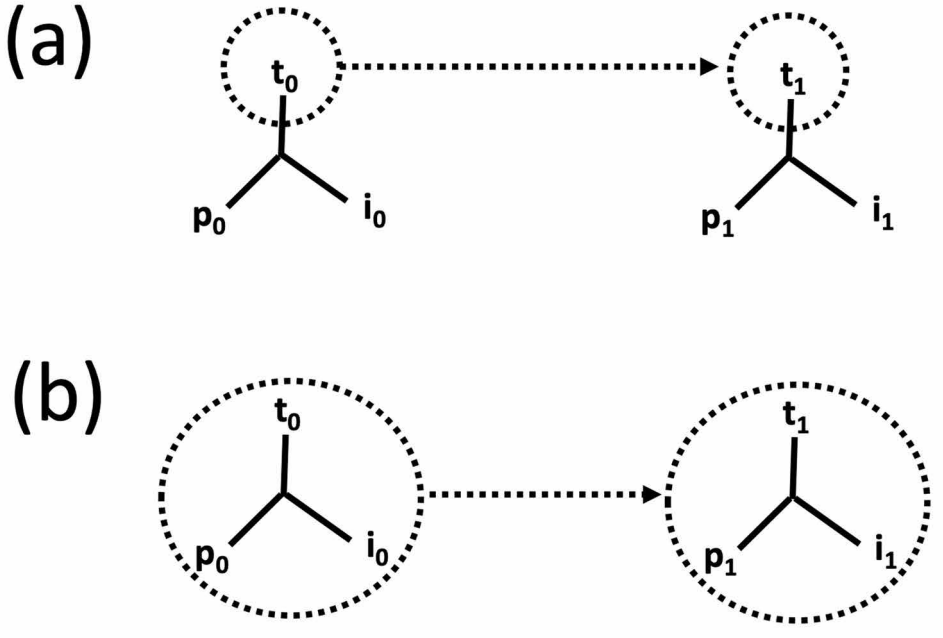

FIGURE 9.2 (a): T_N as interlingual translation as if realized through a purely linguistic process that aims to preserve the meaning (i_0) of a text (t_0) translated into another language (t_1) so $i_0 = i_1$. (b): T_S as alternative or semiotic translation cohering with interpretation and extralingual changes, involving not just representamens but also the phenomena represented and their interpretants. Legend: ⅄: a Peircean triadic sign; ····>: processes of translation; p: a praxis or real-world phenomenon (e.g. a specific friendship practice) as the *object* of the sign; t: word, text, discourse fragments or other information-carrying processes as the *representamen* of the sign; i: the meaning effects (new signs, thoughts, actions, conducts, habits), or *interpretants,* of the sign.

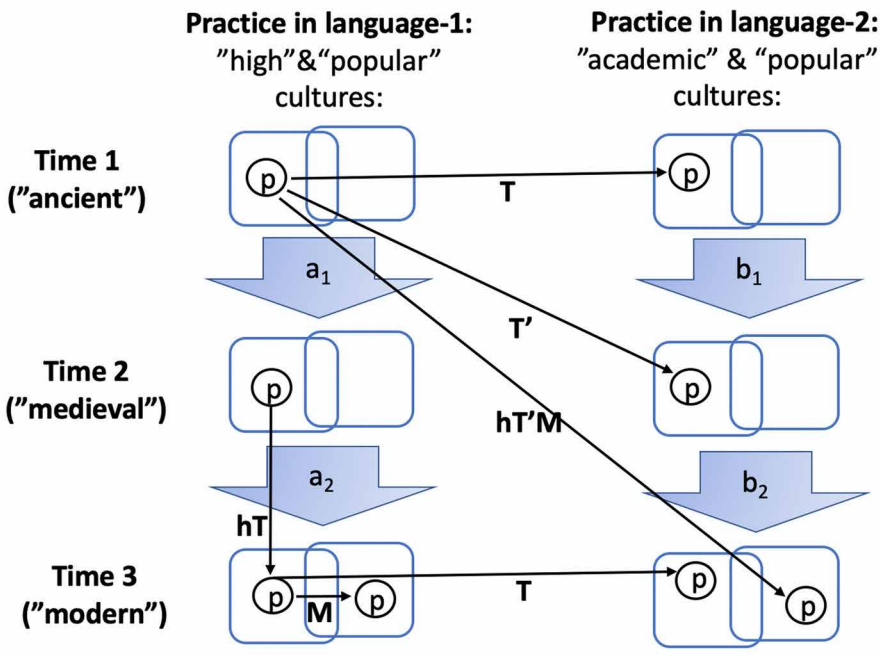

FIGURE 9.3 Schematic representation of T_S, alternative or semiotic translation. It includes translation between cultures (both within and between linguistic communities) and between epochs, of which only three are shown as examples. Legend: *Rounded rectangles*: cultures (with partly overlapping subcultures, e.g. 'high' or 'academic', and 'popular'); p: a practice that may or may not be described by some text within a culture, e.g. texts about friendship, including culture-specific norms of friendship; T: interlingual translation of a contemporary text or practice from language-1 (within a 'high' culture) to language-2 (within an academic culture); T': interlingual translation of a historical (ancient) text from language-1 (within a 'high' culture) to language-2 (within an academic culture); M: translation as the intralingual mediation of a contemporary textually described practice from a 'high' (or professionally specialized) culture to a 'popular' or common culture; hT: intralingual translation (including historical interpretation) of a text or practice from one epoch to another; hT'M: interlingual cross-epochal translation of a historical (ancient) text or discourse from language-1 (within a 'high' culture) to language-2 (within a popular culture); a_1, a_2, b_1, b_2: sociocultural change as generalized translation (including sociocultural change and lingual evolution).

practices, people and alternative conceptualizations, and directs translation studies to culturally and historically sensitive approaches to a broader range of phenomena, which, in fact, are being translated. Figure 9.3 is a simplified diagram (with all arrows being instances of T_S) to illustrate some of this complexity.

We will illustrate this broader semiotic notion of translation (of ideas, practices, norms, habits and words for social phenomena) through friendship as conceived and practiced in distinct epochs and cultures, such as the ancient world in the East and West, the medieval era, early modern and fully modern times. Accounting for this in sufficient detail would demand a book, so here we can only indicate fragments of this larger history.

It is worth remembering that the idea of alternative translation as cultural translation is not completely new, and not restricted to translation studies.[7] In the sphere of religion and mythology, cultural translation is well known, as testified by biblical scholar and historian Mark Smith's characterization of the discourse of *interpretatio graeca* as a comparative methodology using ancient Greek religious concepts and practices, especially the deities and myths, to understand their equivalencies in Egypt or Roman culture: The statement by Herodotus (*c.* 484–c. 425 BCE) that, as a general principle, 'the names of almost all the gods came to Greece from Egypt' (Smith 2008: 252) can be seen as a larger trend towards identifying deities cross-culturally (*cf.* also Assmann 1997). It is easy to see the pantheon of Roman gods as a cultural translation of the Olympian gods of Ancient Greece, but of course, this begs the question about precise and diverse origins and cross-cultural influences. Although one can make long lists of equivalents of deities from Greek, Roman and other cultures, based on usage among the ancients and supported by modern scholarship, 'equivalent' should not be taken to mean 'the same god', because even though the myths or cult practices of a particular Roman deity were influenced by the Greek tradition, the deity may have had an independent origin and a cult practice that were culturally distinctive.[8] The same kind of complexity goes for cross-cultural and cross-epochal translation of friendship texts and practices, as we shall see.

What is gained by treating the influence of certain friendship practices or norms at one place or time upon another as *translational* processes, rather than simply as cultural, social or historical *change*? The benefit is epistemic and can be easily explained more generally. Alternative translation is a new theoretical perspective that sheds light on phenomena in a way that allows us to deal epistemically with some things we would not be able to 'see' had this new beam of investigative light not been directed at them. Compare with notions of performance in performance studies. Not everything *is* a performance in the ordinary sense, but once a theoretical cluster of concepts about performance has emerged, with these new epistemic tools we can investigate numerous social, cultural, aesthetic, moral, political (etc.) activities (even friendship, as we shall see) *as* instances of performativity. We grasp in new ways that language itself has deep performative dimensions, and we can get *new insights* about how language, texts and actions are interrelated.[9] However, accessing the epistemic benefits (as well as drawbacks) of a new perspective demands concrete assessments case by case, and this applies as well to T_S in general and to T_S as applied to friendship studies.

Notice the similarity between T_N and economism. Economism is not only the tendency to reduce all human action to a notion of economic gains and benefits as the core of rational decision-making (rather than taking 'economy' to be a much wider domain of human life, continuous with ecology), it also gives economy a too narrow meaning. Similarly, the problem with T_N is not only that it reduces all translation to interlinguistic textual practices but also that it leaves uninvestigated a whole range of translational phenomena involved in human action. Instead, assuming with Marais (2019: 39) that a 'semiotic theory of translation makes it fully possible to conceptualize the translational aspect or dimension of culture, of society and of living organisms', a focus on friendship as *one* such translational *aspect* in the life of cultures, societies and human beings (and maybe even some animals) raises interesting questions about what exactly is being translated, and about the limited though important role that texts may still play in the overall process. If cultural translation involves changes in both material practices and their governing ideas, as expressed in dialogues and propagated through texts, then the history of ideas and practices in a region like Europe or China is intertwined with cultural translation.

The very notion of intellectual history, or 'history of ideas', invites its study through a lens of translating through time and place.[10] Before exploring the case studies, let us briefly address some questions raised by a generalized semiotic approach to translating friendship.

The first question is about the point in human history when friendship became contingently related to texts. It seems fairly obvious that it was always related to *communication* in its widest sense. Friendship among humans may have an evolutionary prehistory, as testified by the patterns of friendship recently investigated for the great apes and other species. Such friendships are forms of communicative interactions between animals forming social ties within smaller groups of conspecifics.[11] Friendship in human societies is likely to have existed from the very beginning of our species, perhaps before the invention of spoken language, and along with the evolution of parallel forms of embodied biocommunication. When written language and societal institutions emerged later on, friendship could be codified by symbolic exchanges of gifts or in texts describing its normative practices.

A second issue is about the sense in which we can claim that human-specific friendship patterns 'translate' across human societies. Friendship does seem to be a human universal (there are none or extremely few human cultures with little or no signs of friendship[12]), though the expressions of this universal are highly moulded by sociocultural processes, some of which can have a translational nature. There are ongoing debates in linguistics, anthropology, history and philosophy about the degree of cross-cultural universality (and thus, translatability) of friendship. If friendship as a cluster of relational forms has been with us from the very beginning of our species, a logical implication from an evolutionary point of view is that translational processes (involving cultural transmission, as well as transmission of the genetic makeup required to make us sociable) have been involved in transferring these forms through generations and along routes of migrations.

We may ponder, third, if, and in what sense, patterns of friendship practice could become translated from one culture or epoch to another. The examples we will see below support the claim that cross-epochal and cross-cultural translations of friendship form parts of wider processes of interactions between cultures and languages through time and place. Historically such processes are interwoven with 'civilizing' processes of socio-economic change in education, manners, public/private borders, transmission of intangible cultural heritage, state building, and the globalization, hybridization and pluralization of cultures.[13]

Fourth, aiming at a T_S account of 'translated friendship' through sociocultural time and space, we need to distinguish between three dimensions, all with T_S aspects: (a) real *practices* (talk and action) of particular friendships between actual agents; (b) a *discourse* that influences practices of friendship in a specific (sub)culture, expressed, for instance, in proverbs, poetry or such television sitcom streams as 'Friends' (broadcast by NBC and depicting the fragility of romantic relationships and the resilient potentials of friendship); (c) *systematic* and often edifying discourses, for example, in philosophy, about ideal or 'best' friendship. Though these three dimensions can, in an analytic sense, be treated separately, a likely hypothesis is that, historically, they came into being through vast processes of T_S of (a) into (b) with the advent of language, and of (a) + (b) into (c) with the advent of religious, political, ideological and educational discourses. The three dimensions could also be conceptualized within general semiotics as three social semiotic systems – praxis, normativity and theory – that are, to various degrees, intertranslatable.[14]

Lastly, a fifth concern is whether friendship practices themselves (within a culture and at a given time) can be conceived of in terms of translation. A hint was given in the prelude. One can argue that *the self* of a person is a translational result of being partly scaffolded by that person's friends, a social world of Other, including a good friend as another self. The very notion of friendship is also accessible for semiotic analysis.[15]

TRANSLATIONAL FRIENDSHIP: CASE STUDIES

The case studies of translational semiosis (T_S) of friendship will range within an epoch across languages and cultures; across epochs within a cultural tradition; and, finally, across both epochs and cultures. Though we move beyond an interlingual focus to discuss alternative forms of translation, we will first comment on a problem that has been discussed in relation to the T_N of friendship across languages and epochs: The challenge is not only a narrow focus in translation studies on T_N (interlingual translation) but also a tendency to conceive of interlingual translation too narrowly.

T_N across epochs, languages and disciplines: From philia *to friendship*

Take as an example a debate about how to grasp ancient Greek texts on friendship if we take their descriptions of conflicts between 'friends' to mean that same as we do by this word today. Though we may speak of siblings or spouses who are also 'friends', friendship today is typically considered a voluntary and affectionate bond between non-kin. In Ancient Greece, 'friendship' or *philia* covered a wider set of relationships than friendship, such as love between kin, and even solidarity between citizens (Konstan 1997). Classics scholar Elizabeth S. Belfiore did an insightful study, called *Murder Among Friends: Violation of Philia in Greek Tragedy*, and concluded that 'what evidence there is supports the view that tragedy as a genre was concerned with terrible events among *philoi*' (Belfiore 2000: 119, *philoi* is plural of *philos*, friend). David Konstan, also a classicist, criticized the book's title. According to him, it should have been *Murder Among Kin,* because, going through the evidence, he found no murder among friends (in the modern sense of the word) in the Greek tragedies. The harms, violations and killings were all among family members! Violence between friends (in our sense) was 'virtually nonexistent' (Konstan 2001), and why so? We can only guess. In her book (2000: 19), Belfiore takes issue with Konstan's (1997) critique of the common practice of translating of the word *philia* as kinship or friendship and the word *philos* as kin or friend, while Konstan (2001: 271), in turn, thought that her 'broadening the meaning of philos' had the unfortunate consequence, which goes unnoticed in Belfiore's discussion, that the absence of murder among non-kin friends is left unexplained.

What seems to be a smaller disagreement about how to T_N-translate friendship from ancient Greek to contemporary English is, in fact, related to a broader controversy about the T_S of friendship across epochs and how its practices are understood within the different taxonomies of personal relationships (*cf.* also Cantarella 2009). Interestingly, this debate relates to how different disciplines constitute their own specific perspectives of a phenomenon, and how such disciplinary perspectives may become translated from one field of research to another: Before the 'anthropological turn in classical historiography' (Konstan 1997: 3*ff*), there was little concern about taking classical Greek texts as evidence of the ancients' high valuation of deep friendship as we know it. But after the classics had gone through such an anthropological turn (or translation[16]) in the 1970s

and 1980s, classicists began to see ancient people as relatively more 'Other' than modern people, and ancient friendships were seen more as part of a wider system of instrumental transactions with implicated obligations. Thus, the forms of reciprocity in friendship were seen as more obligatory, and less as an affectionate relationship characterized by intimacy as we know it, ungoverned by calculations of interests. Konstan himself was a part of this turn, but, as he continued his classic studies, he found so many anomalies in the implied assumptions that, in his 1997 book, he presented arguments that challenged the anthropologized scheme of classic friendship. This controversy is not yet resolved and has left many open questions.

One lesson is that, in science and scholarship, one does not study phenomena such as friendship directly; researchers make a model of it that – depending upon a disciplinary view or perspective – lifts some aspects of the phenomenon out of its real complexity to constitute it as an epistemic object (an apple as an object of biochemistry is its metabolic processes; an apple as an object of economy is processes of supply, demand, price changes; etc.). In this way, research translates everyday complexity to (mono- or inter)disciplinary simplicity, and if researchers want to apply knowledge gained in other disciplines, they must beware of the need to reflect on processes of recontextualization and retranslation.

T_S *within epoch, across languages*

The model of T_S sketched in Figure 9.3 should (as a generalization of T_N) also be able to account for T_N and problems related to 'traditional' interlingual translation of 'friendship' (for instance, as we saw above, by taking interdisciplinary interactions into account). Within a specifically linguistic context, the T_N translatability of 'friendship' has been debated. Just as the universality of the friendship phenomenon comes in degrees,[17] there are problems (at least for some cultures) related to the actual interlingual translation of not only texts on friendship from one language to another but also translation of the very concept of friendship and friends in English to what should be something 'corresponding' in another culture. A collection of remarkable examples is provided by Polish-Australian linguist Anna Wierzbicka (1997), who analysed English, Russian, Polish, German, Japanese and Australian cultural scripts through what she called their 'key words' (e.g. friendship, freedom, homeland, some swearwords). Her approach was inspired by anthropologists using special but common words of a culture to provide information and significant insights (recognized by others familiar with the cultures in question) on a whole complex of cultural values and attitudes, expressed in common conversational routines, and revealing a whole network of specific 'cultural scripts'.

Wierzbicka's work in general combines (i) an empirically based aim of finding some universals that characterize all human languages, while also (ii) investigating the huge variety of unique languages and modes of seeing and thinking the world and, to some extent, translating/explicating the unique, culture-bound meanings by means of simpler and perhaps universal concepts, and, finally (iii) criticizing[18] the presumptions of those scholars who imagine that they can use English words to fully capture all details of human experience because English is such a rich and international language. Though Wierzbicka did not characterize her methodology in the following terms, one could argue that her approach is implicitly applying a form of T_S (culture translation) upon the material of T_N (i.e. the incommensurable keywords for non-kin human relationships she analyses). In Chapter 2 of Wierzbicka (1997), she does two things. First, she makes a case for a shift in the meaning of the English 'friend', *from* meaning someone who is dear, loved and true

to a contemporary meaning of being someone who is enjoyable and close, that is, 'a shift from (habitual) affectionate thoughts to (occasional) pleasurable company' (Wierzbicka 1997: 52). She sees the older meaning as being closer to the classic Roman conception based on mutual good will and affection, and believes that the modern expression 'close friend' reflects such a change, because, in the past, all friends were close friends (p. 53). For this claim, she uses historical lexical evidence, but some of her observations seems questionable and have been criticized.[19]

Second, and more important for T_S, Wierzbicka maps the meanings of the friendship concepts, scripts and their related incompatible taxonomies of interpersonal non-kin relationships in English, Russian, Polish and Australian cultures through a comparative analysis, resulting in a detailed list of explications of these terms, given in English with simple words that are not unique to English, but translatable to all other languages.[20] To summarize the conclusion of her analysis, at least eleven non-identical friendship-like concepts stand out (where I use the ≠ sign to indicate non-identity within the family of related terms), namely, (English) Old-English *friend* ≠ present-English *friend* ≠ (Russian) *drug* ≠ *podruga* ≠ *prijatel'* ≠ *tovarisc* ≠ *rodnye* ≠ (Polish) *kolega* ≠ *przyjaciel* ≠ *znajomy* ≠ (Australian) *mate*.

Here we see a linguist not only focusing on texts and T_N but also actively T_S-translating (without using specific semiotic concepts) cultural scripts for a whole set of non-identical relationships with various similarities. Wierzbicka's main point (and why we can see this as T_S-translations) is that the source and the target of a concept in any such translation are non-isomorphic (not just linguistically but also culturally), not to be confused, and this implies some degree of meaning shift that has to be interpreted within the larger culture of any such notion.

T_S within epoch, across cultures: Anthropological challenges

Investigating T_S 'within an epoch' demands a caveat: Though instances of cultural translation appear to be within a single epoch, this may only be in the sense of objective global physical time. When people from different cultures meet – a New York-based artist conversing with a farmer from Alabama, or a Californian anthropologist visiting indigenous people in the Amazon – such meetings may display forms of cultural 'non-simultaneity' (in the sense of Ernst Bloch's *Ungleichzeitigkeit*[21]) if habitual patterns and conceptions of people clash because they belong to a mixture of premodern, modern and late modern forms of thinking and acting. Non-simultaneity may also appear within a single 'culture' if fragments of premodern forms of actions, rituals, etc. exist in parallel with different later forms.

The anthropologist Nita Kumar did her fieldwork in the Indian city of Banaras (Varanasi), which she sees as 'premodern' and provincial; she studied the work and leisure activities of the city's artisans (Kumar 1992; 2017). It is well known that ethnographic fieldwork as a research method has the aim of gaining a close and intimate familiarity with a given group of individuals and their practices through an intensive involvement with people serving as 'informants' in their natural environment – the 'field' – over an extended period of time.[22] Kumar discovered that, for her own fieldwork, she had to face 'the seeming incommensurability of the gap between myself, the Indian who was an educated scholar, and the Indians I met, who were uneducated informants, even while civilization and nation are supposed to be the prime determinants of identity' (2017: 245). Kumar was curious to learn, as she explains, about 'the differences in the

ideas of friendship between me, a veritable normative subject of Indian intellectual and educational history, and my artisans, the indigenous working classes, the other subjects of Indian history' (2017: 245). In her reflections on her fieldwork, written some years later, she relates that she 'had planned to be a professional researcher collecting information from informants; as it turned out, informants would interact with me only if I would be a sister or a friend to them' (p. 245). Thus, her informants 'demanded' her friendship; she was not allowed just to record theirs. Though Kumar does not explicitly use the T_S perspective, it is arguable that her informants actually translated their own roles vis-à-vis her into her being a much more familiar or 'close' person in a network of ties that could involve utility as well as affection, and even love. The translation was mutual; she accepted it, and often had a great time with them.

This experience, to be understood as a translational process of a cross-cultural kind, came with a certain irony, as she relates, namely,

> that the anthropological project of taking their subjectivities seriously turned around to my being aggressively taught by them of their agency, not their passivity. Their exercise of agency and control in our relationship provided the very vocabulary for it, and resulted in an ironic defeat for me, and a victory for them. I did not succeed in transforming them into my 'informants' without first graduating into their 'friend' and 'sister'.
>
> (p. 246)

As described in greater detail in her fieldwork memoirs (Kumar 1992), these (what I am tempted to call) *translational friendships* were varied, took different forms and often resembled some kind of 'fictive kinship' (though she doesn't use this technical anthropological term), such as becoming someone's 'sister' or 'daughter' and, thereby, also inheriting all of that person's other family relationships. For instance, 'before I knew it I was established as his older sister. This was no mere formality. I was his wife's sister-in-law, his parents' daughter, his children's *bua* (paternal aunt), and many convoluted relationships with the rest of his large extended family' (1992: 147). Once Kumar fathomed what was going on, she could also, in certain situations, take the initiative to become a person's 'sister out of choice' (p. 175), when that person was busy and therefore elusive, and Kumar, in addition, wanted to interact with his quiet daughter and illiterate wife, as she says, 'eat with his family, sleep overnight with them, share their worries and thoughts (p. 147) and she realized that the fictive kinship could make them more comfortable and allowed her to reciprocate in some ways for their extensive help to her. In the world of the artisans of Banaras, there seemed to be no space for voluntarily serving a stranger by answering questions about many aspects of their own personal lives. The stranger had to be translated into a friend. A brass-smith with strong theatre interests 'got tired of … [Kumar's] empty questioning' and invited her home 'for meals and the festival of Holi', and thus she 'was adopted as a family member thenceforth and everyone breathed easier' (2017: 246). To other informants, Kumar developed close ties, similar to 'a hearty colleague's relationship' (1992: 189), such as that with a poet, who was 'no brother', but a good friend who 'shed many friendly reflections on my task' (2017: 246). He embarrassed her by his generosity (1992: 177), and perhaps also by what she admits to be 'an ease with emotions' that she 'had never learned to communicate' (1992: 190). So many times, a local informant translated the anthropologist into a friend (often via fictive kinship).[23] The anthropologist herself could be troubled about this, or at least ambivalent, being, on the one hand, a friend to many people, as Kumar noted, 'almost

in the literal sense of the word ("a person attached to another by respect or affection")' (1992: 189) and, on the other hand, professionally having a 'hidden agenda' that pricked her conscience (p. 189). This unease with her own motivation can be seen as questioning how to translate or accommodate her own, more modern, notion of friendship – a notion that is often slightly romanticized as being a purely non-instrumental relationship for its own sake – to a more pragmatic notion of friendship as also involving motivations of utility and pleasure.

Looking back, this prompted Kumar to ask if she did 'merely playact the gestures of friendship?' (2017: 246), yet she was sure that there '*was* something more real than the performance'. However, she also concluded that what both she herself and her informants were doing was performing friendship, and doing so perfectly: 'Performing friendship was what there was to do' (p. 246). This performative perspective upon friendship in contemporary India (not yet explicit in her 1992 memoir) is inspired by more recent anthropological studies of how people may play with hierarchical gendered roles. One could say that, at this point, performance studies meets translation studies. Kumar could as well have concluded her 2017 article by claiming that 'translating friendship was what there was to do'. Remember the distinction in performance studies between 'is performance' and 'as performance', like 'theatre is a performance', while almost anything can be analysed in its performative aspect 'as performance' (see Note 9). So, the question that was nagging Kumar was 'were these friendships for good?', that is, friendships definitively, or were they 'just playacts', performances? As an answer, with no further analysis, she rejects the relevance of this distinction, thereby distancing herself from a romanticized, idealistic and modern idea about 'true', authentic friendship versus more superficial relationships. By this move, I think, Kumar avoids a modernist-existentialist jargon of authenticity that denigrates common social behaviours as being 'just' performed ('in bad faith', *mauvais fois*, as it were, to use Sartre's and de Beauvoir's term), that is, performed in self-deceiving modes that ignore individual freedom *not* to conform to social demands of performing a role in a special way. Kumar simply observes that the translation (or performance) of friendship actually worked.

Does it always work? Can some aspects of friendship become untranslatable in certain situations? It is far from trivial (or ethically uncomplicated) to use friendship as 'a method'[24] in ethnography. The anthropologist can come to question her own concept of friendship, or the nature of a relationship with an informant, especially in circumstances of conflict and war that may suddenly block face-to-face contact but generate needs for material aid to an informant. This is exemplified by the work of a Dutch anthropologist, Marina de Regt, who describes in detail her relationship with Yemeni friends, especially a woman referred to as Noura. De Regt and Noura became close friends after their first meeting in Yemen in 1993, and only later, but long before the present war, Noura became one of her informants (De Regt 2015; 2019; forthcoming). Due to the war in Yemen it became impossible for de Regt to return; phone contact became essential for her to follow the situation, and she started sending money to support Noura, who was in dire need. As reflected in De Regt's articles (aiming at discussing the ethical dilemma of combining friendship with research), their relationship changed, from an equal one of mutual care, affection, shared activities like vivid discussions about politics, to one in which De Regt felt reduced to a money provider, though she also felt guilt about her more privileged situation. Many details have been omitted from this brief summary, but it is fair to say that, due to circumstances, a modern kind of private friendship, centred on conversations, leisure activities, mutual sharing of personal information and affection for the other person for her own sake, was slowly translated by the semiotic constraints of the

circumstances, so to say, into an unequal relationship more like a patron-client relation, of providing material support, perhaps in exchange for new information from the field, but with a decreased sense of emotional mutuality. De Regt noticed that 'the emphasis in our phone conversations is mostly on her. She only calls when she needs money or when something has happened in Yemen' (2015: 62), and this reminded De Regt about the kind of relationship that many migrants from developing countries have with their relatives back home – being worried that, when they receive a call, they will be asked for money.

This T_S of one instance of a model of friendship (idealized as equal, mutual, free of power and material obligations) turning into another relationship is a multidimensional process, which involves changes in the two persons' mutuality, emotions, degrees of freedom, wealth and well-being, implying also changing commitments, manipulation, guilt and pain. In her 2015 paper De Regt felt that her relationship with Noura was no longer one of friendship, rather one of fictive kinship, and she felt that they had 'become sentenced to each other' (p. 65); in her 2019 follow-up she still perceives a friendship, though 'going through difficult times', as the war precluded 'any opportunity for Noura to return my gifts in her own immaterial ways' (p. 109); while De Regt (in a forthcoming publication) details how her 'financial support to Noura has come to an end, and with it our friendship'. In this later paper De Regt also describes other friends in Yemen whom she still helps, with the difference that they only occasionally ask for financial help, and their 'contact is not only based on requests for money'. In summary, De Regt offers a series of forthright and thought-provoking accounts of clashes between friends in the cultural translation of friendship when its boundary conditions put severe constraints on the two friends' actions and reactions.

T_S within the Western tradition, across epochs: Virtue, fraternity, best friends?

Is it possible to find a long historical line of T_S translation from virtue friendship, from the ancient Greeks up onto the modern notion of best friendship as a private relation of intimate trust, affection and confidentiality? A tentative affirmative answer can be given, based on a collaborative attempt by twelve scholars, organized by Barbara Caine, to map the history of friendship in the West, that is, its meanings, the nature and changing patterns of friendship from the ancient times to late modernity (Caine 2009). After a brief summary of this collective work, we will question its implicit idea – that it *is* possible to reconstruct a complex history of friendship in the West – by asking if this story is also about a complex of translational processes.

Although the transformations of friendship ideals and practices through epochs (as schematized in Figure 9.3) are extremely complex, some patterns stand out. Caine's research collective discusses classical ideals, especially Cicero's thinking on friendship, which set out the enduring Greek and Roman conceptions of friendship that had a great influence up through the Renaissance. The Greek *philia* involved, as noted above, a wider range of relationships, including those with kin, guests and political allies. While there were competing visions of how such bonds should be regarded and sustained, the two most persistent classical conceptions were those of Aristotle and Cicero, who both stressed the shared moral commitments in friendships and being each other's equals. Cicero (106–43 BCE) became the basis of discussions of friendship for centuries to come, up to the Renaissance. The ideals were transformed/translated in response to Christianity, which preached universal love and charity rather than exclusive friendship, suggesting that human relationships should serve not the people in them, so much as God. These

values, and monasticism, came to overshadow ancient ideals, and medieval society altered ideas about friendship as well, regarding the relationship as a way to cement ties and delineate obligations between unequal parties; friendship became the glue of feudalism.[25] Yet personal friendship re-emerged in the twelfth century, especially in the Cistercian monk Aelred of Rievaulx, who tried, both theoretically and practically, to reconcile Cicero's celebration of ideal friendship with the Christian ideas of the vertical love of God. But there were also 'pacts of friendship' between men who were equals – ties so close that the friends sometimes chose to be buried together. During the Renaissance, men and women elaborated on classical and medieval traditions, creating a new culture of friendship, evident in double portraits, stylized letters and ritual gift-giving. Then, due to the Enlightenment, there is evidence that equality in relationships became more important, and friendships were viewed in a more secular light, though the relationships were increasingly sentimentalized. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, women's friendship gained greater notice, especially in literature (once women 'took up the pen', it became possible for the historians of Caine's team to take a more gendered and differentiating approach to friendship). In the nineteenth century, there are far richer sources to show the variety of ways in which different classes, races and sexes envisioned friendship and its political implications. Working-class movements expressed their revolutionary goals in terms of friendship and fraternity; middle-class reformers hoped to bridge class differences with the poor through practices of friendship. An array of social changes affected friendship in the twentieth century. Whereas, in earlier centuries, friendship often entailed public obligations and services, today friends may render service to each other, but it is of a more private and emotional nature, and friendship has come to be envisioned less instrumentally. Another change was a re-emergence of homophobia, which affected, especially, heterosexual male friendships. Once idealized as the quintessential form of friendship, men's relationships changed dramatically, as fears of homosexuality developed. Simultaneously, women's bonds, which had seemed of secondary importance to the public in earlier periods, came almost to define friendship in the modern era. Another intriguing development was the way that people eager for political change conceived of friendship. It had earlier been questioned whether true amity was possible across racial, class or ethnic divides, but, by the twentieth century such doubts were disappearing, and many came to see friendship as possessing a power to unite the divided and transform politics – quite a translation of Aristotelian 'civic friendship'. The contributors to the final parts of Caine (2009) suggest that, in contemporary society, friendship has become a relationship of unprecedented importance.

If the whole T_S of friendship in the West, though complex and fragmented, displays emotional continuities in its forms, there are also breaks, or at least one remarkable relocation of friendship from the sphere of the community or *polis* (as distinct from a not-yet-emerged bourgeois public) to a more private sphere. As noted by David Garrioch (in Caine 2009: 202, drawing on the work of Allan Silver), the tradition of Scottish moral economists (Hume, Smith, Ferguson) argues that it was only in commercial societies of the kind they advocated and which were emerging at that time, that true friendship was possible: 'For Smith, the development of markets, which were impersonal and based on self-interest, promoted the appearance of another, qualitatively different sphere of life in which a superior form of friendship could be cultivated' (Caine 2009: 202), that is, outside the sphere of necessity and instrumental interest.[26] Genuine friendships – established for their own sake – were not seen as possible at the marketplace, in the factories or in poor rural settings. Neither was friendship sustained by the church, as it was difficult to translate

this mutual and preferential form of love into the Christian dogma of the non-preferential love of a heavenly Father (it may be a moot point whether *philia* was (mis)translated into *agape* or simply displaced by charity).[27] And in the public sphere, and especially in the state, friendship, patronage and networks had already 'lost something of their charm'[28] due to the aim of building strong institutions based upon meritocratic norms and rational bureaucracy, and avoiding cronyism and nepotism. So, when friendship was translated into modernity, it became a private affair, and its best versions passed, from emphasizing its virtuous character to centring upon emotions, psychological closeness and intimacy.

A note on the continuity between the ancient and modern forms of friendship: Obviously the Athenian polis, where Aristotle developed his theory of friendship, differed a great deal from late modernity, but there are also similarities that may have facilitated smoother translations, not only of texts but also of the famous three types (as real generalities) of friendship that Aristotle described – those motivated by pleasure, utility and virtue – so that, in one sense, this translation is a part of a complex of civilizing processes within the evolution of Western societies. Some of the similarities between ancient and modern models of friendship (especially translating virtue friendship into 'best' or 'close' friendship) are related to affluence as a boundary condition for these models, and to what Henrich (2020) describes as WEIRD people, that is, that peculiar minority of humanity coming from societies that are Western, Educated, Industrialized, Rich and Democratic (who also have an exceptional psychology, as Henrich points out). The Athenian polis was not industrialized, but Aristotle came from the aristocracy and was, by contemporary standards, an educated citizen who was well-off. The aristocrats could afford to have friends, not just as a means 'to harm one's enemies'[29] or as political allies but for their own sake, cultivating virtue.

This may help explain the astonishing ease by which Aristotle's philosophical analysis can be translated into a critical version of present-day social psychology, as exemplified by a recent study (and a kind of 'test' of Aristotle) by Anderson and Fowers (2020). By translating the ancient typology forwarded by Aristotle to assess friends' various characteristics, they discovered important variation across friendships of today, noting that such 'friendship characteristics appear to have important implications for understanding the role of friends in happiness and flourishing' (p. 276). Their 'test' and translation of Aristotelian friendship is part of an important critique of present-day social research for being distortive to the best kinds of friendship, because it is guided by 'an impoverished and largely implicit theory' with a narrow instrumental and individualistic perspective, suggesting that what is important about friendship for people (being asked to self-report their 'friendship satisfaction') are only the private, personal benefits that the friends obtain (Fowers and Anderson 2018: 185*ff*). The implication is that much social science research on friendship tends to ignore that relationship's communal dimension, which affords individuals with security and experiences of caring for and being for others as ends in themselves. By translating the Aristotelian axiology of friendship, Fowers and Anderson remind us of five critical elements of a contemporary friendship relationship, namely, that (1) what is most valued in the best kinds of friendship are the friend's welfare and the friendship itself; (2) the good friend's pattern of acting and being contributes to its robustness; (3) the friend brings forth one's best self through encouragement; (4) the trust in the relation enables security, conversational quality and possibilities of self-reflection and self-improvement; and, finally, that (5) friends help each other to pursue common goals and stay committed to them. Thus, it is not lost in their T_S of Aristotle's model that shared activities within a good friendship are constitutive of the friendship itself; it is its own ends and means, not a means to any higher or ulterior end.

How about translating friendship before the ages of the Greek polis? As shown by Moses Finley, in his study of the heroic world of Odysseus in the archaic period, there was a special kind of ritualized friendship, *xenia* (sometimes translated as 'guest-friendship'), that could be entered into by two powerful men who were not from the same family, tribe or area. To understand its function, it must be remembered that such men were obsessed with status, and we should not miss the double significance of wealth: 'The circulation of treasure was as essential a part of heroic life as its acquisition; and it was this movement, the fact of its existence and the orbits it followed that set that life [of a hero] apart from any other life of accumulation' (Finley 1977: 125). Finley explains that, in this unlettered epoch,

> the heroic world was unable to visualize any achievement or relationship except in concrete terms. The gods were anthropomorphized, the emotions and feelings were located in specific organs of the body, even the soul was materialized. Every quality or state had to be translated into some specific symbol, honor into a trophy, friendship into treasure, marriage into gifts of cattle.
>
> (p. 125)

And 'trust into ritual objects', adds his student, Gabriel Herman (1987: 50, 61) in his detailed study of *xenia* and its role in Ancient Greece before the emergence of city states and, later, in parallel with them. The personal *xenia* between men that criss-crossed the ancient world with an extensive network of personal alliances followed a specific etiquette for that relationship's establishment, in which an initial exchange of gifts was an essential part. It was almost a *rite de passage* that effectively translated a stranger into a friend. This exchange differed from other gift exchanges by the need of having the counter-gift follow promptly on the reception of the first gift; furthermore, the two gifts had to be of a commensurate intrinsic value. Over time, this exchange gave rise to a more specialized form of gift, called the *symbolon*, the only function of which was to prove one's identity (a bone, coin, tablet, or similar object was broken into two complementary pieces that could later be shown to fit together). Thus, the ritual can 'be viewed as effecting a breakthrough in the psychological barriers of strangerness and hostility' (Herman 1987: 69), changing their relative positions. Herman notes that ritualized friendship, abundantly attested in both Greek and Latin sources from all periods of classical antiquity, disappears from view in late antiquity (maybe due to another T_S): 'There are good reasons to assume, however, that it was gradually annexed by the Christian Church, since it reappears in a new guise in the early medieval variants of godparenthood: Latin *compaternitas*, and Byzantine *synteknia*' (Herman 2012).

T_S across epochs and cultures: Aristotelean friendship in Ming China

Before we discuss the T_S character of the next case, Matteo Ricci's translation of the Western philosophical canon of virtuous friendship into Chinese culture, we must beware the common presumption that there was a complete lack of theoretical interest in friendship in premodern China. For instance, reviewing a collection of philosophical treatments of friendship in a range of cultures, the reviewer Robert Burns makes the sweeping statement that

> [w]hat certainly emerges from the essays on China, Japan, and India is that in these Oriental cultures there is apparently nothing to compare with the concentration

> on friendship as a major theme which characterizes all cultures influenced by the Graeco-Roman philosophy and Semitic religions (including Islam) at least up until modern times.
>
> (Burns 1997: 351)

But such comparisons are difficult to make, tend to overgeneralize differences and may seem a little outdated.[30] If we consider the situation regarding friendship in premodern China more in detail – as described by Whalen Lai (1996) in the book reviewed by Burns – the picture is more complex. On the one hand it is correct, as Lai notes, that 'Confucianism does not associate love with friendship as the Greeks with the *filia* would' (p. 223); rather, it emphasizes trust, as evidenced by the *Analects* of Confucius (fifth to sixth century BCE).[31] Yet the virtue of trust – 'required of all men in in all social dealings' – 'is not qualitatively unique to friends' (p. 223), so this seems to indicate that, indeed, friendship was simply 'not a central concept in China' (p. 218). Real friendships, though, existed and could be personal, but they were not premised on self-disclosure as in modern forms of friendship; the Confucian gentlemen did not need 'to know each other too intimately' (Lai 1996: 228). But Lai also shows how poets of the Tang dynasty (616–907 CE) 'legitimized friendship but also gave private feelings a public form' (p. 239), and how the literati of a more neo-Daoist cast, later on (in the ninth to tenth centuries CE), brought some emotional and aesthetic dimensions into a relationship that was previously seen as founded on rites and rituals. Thus, Lai's essay takes a long-range look at the issue of friendship in Confucian China, from its roots in Confucius's own thinking, via Confucian scholars, through the eras of Han and Wei-Chin, and further on to a real 'flowering of friendship ideology' in Late Ming (1368–1644 CE), where it became 'the radical means of restoring humanness to government' (Lai 1996: 244). For this radical agenda, Lai believes that it can be 'translated into a postmodern discourse on virtue' (p. 245), in which one works politically for 'the communal good' upon which a community is based, discerning the borders between public and private interests – Lai asks, 'Do we not still believe that somehow a Good Society based on friendship is possible?' (1996:249).

Wei-cheng Chu's essay, with the apt title, 'The Utility of "Translated Friendship" for the Sinophone World: Past and Present' (Chu 2017), deserves attention. Chu describes how Matteo Ricci (1552–1610), an Italian Jesuit priest and founding figure of the Jesuit China missions, translated a selection of Western philosophical friendship discourse into a Chinese pamphlet, entitled *You Lun,* [On Friendship], published in 1596 (Ricci 2009). In 1582 Ricci had arrived at the Portuguese settlement of Macau, where he began his missionary work in China.[32] When Wei-cheng Chu uses the notion of 'translated friendship' in his essay, it is not in the simple sense of a T_N of specific works of Aristotle or other classics; what Ricci did was to distil a core of ideas on virtue friendship from Renaissance Latin texts[33] into seventy-six (in the first edition) and, later, one hundred (in the third) thought-provoking Chinese maxims, written in a masterful classical style. According to his recent translator, Timothy Billings (2009), these sayings established his reputation as a great sage. Lai concurs:

> Many Chinese were drawn to the … passages on friendship from Aristotle's *Nichomachaean Ethics*, Plato's *Republic*, Cicero's *De Amicitia*, plus other Greek and Latin writings. This interest in friendship was however more than academic. It

> informed the political platform of the 'reform party', the Tung-lin Academy which was then opposing the abuse of power by the eunuchs at court.
>
> (Lai 1996: 217; *cf*. McDermott 1992)

Both Lai and Chu emphasize that what was being translated was a whole package of idealistic ideas about friendship in the West, into a specific Chinese context, and that these ideas fell in the fertile soil of interpreters. There was already in the intellectual environment of late-Ming China 'exciting new talks on friendship', though this tradition of Chinese discourse on friendship was less elaborate than the Western one. Thus, one cannot simply call Ricci's T_S of friendship a direct Western import.[34] What was it, then? Chu notices the intervenient character of Ricci's translation as being a part of his larger missionary project, so its 'utility' is to be found in this context, and Chu suggests that such scholarship-based interventions may also be possible in modernity – that 'the modern form of friendship can still be expected to exert a significant interventionary [*sic*] effect in shaking off the traditional pull' (Chu 2017: 181). Remember that 'mission' for Christians is about sending the Holy Spirit into the world (from Latin *mittere*, 'send'), a project that needs forms of T_S – a variety of translational semioses! By establishing himself as a sage within a Chinese context, Ricci could, at least temporarily, translate himself into a local interlocutor of the literati who were critically opposed to the strict hierarchy of imperial rule. Scholars like Billings have shown in detail that disregarding 'whether Ricci actually tried to accommodate European ideas about friendship to what he thought might appeal to Chinese readers, his essay was nonetheless inserted into a preexisting discourse on friendship, notwithstanding fundamental differences between the two' (Billings 2009: 50*ff*).

If one is worried that 'much of the debate about intersemiotic translation is still biased toward language, or models itself on interlinguistic translation' (Marais 2019: 62), we must, in the present context, remember that Ricci's translation is not just about translating or rewriting texts of friendship from European languages into Chinese – it is part of a larger translation[35] of ideas, people, and discourses, integral to his general mission, and in a sense also including a translation of himself in this new context, by aligning himself with the Confucian elite of literati. As Burke (2007a: 9) observes, 'translation implies 'negotiation' and, thus,

> Matteo Ricci discovered that if he dressed as a priest no one would take him seriously, so he dressed like a Confucian scholar instead, thus 'translating' his social position into Chinese. He allowed the Chinese whom he converted to pay reverence to their ancestors in the traditional manner, arguing that this was a social custom rather than a religious one. He translated the word 'God' by the neologism *Tianzhu* [*Tianzi*], literally 'Lord of Heaven', and allowed Chinese Christians to refer simply to *Tian*, 'Heaven', as Confucius had done.

The first maxim in Ricci's *On Friendship* is retranslated into English as 'My friend is not an other, but half of myself, and thus a second me – I must therefore regard my friend as myself' (Ricci 2009: 91), echoing Aristotle's *Ethics*, and setting a strong point of departure not just for the following maxims but also for Ricci himself in making new friends. Ricci's pamphlet was published and republished twice in his lifetime by several of his befriended local officials – officially without Ricci's knowledge, 'since the Jesuits were not allowed to

print without approval from Rome, which could take years' (Billings 2009: 2). Chen Jiru (1558–1639), a Ming Dynasty writer, wrote a preface to the maxims, emphasizing that '[u]nless there are friendships, the other four [of the five cardinal] relationships cannot be fixed' (Wang 2017: 27; *cf*. Billings 2009: 48), thus, situating Ricci's work on friendship tightly within the Confucian context.[36]

Ricci's intervenient pamphlet was not singular; five decades later, in 1647, another Italian Jesuit, Martino Martini, wrote a sequel, called *Pamphlet on Gathering Friends*. Martini warns the reader that not all love is compatible with friendship. He brings to the attention an ambiguity in male friendship that can be paraphrased as a distinction between 'those who love my body' and 'those who befriend my heart'. This concern about conflating homosociality and homosexuality was also Ricci's, argues the scholar Giovanni Vitiello:

> In the cultural translation that Ricci and Martini's books mean to provide, sexuality is not left out. Their topic being friendship between two men, the sexuality in question cannot but be male homosexuality. By hinting at a disruption between friendship and homoeroticism, apparently triggered by their perceived contiguity, the two Europeans are also smuggling into China a sexual ideology that implies opprobrium towards sodomy.
>
> (Vitiello 2000: 251)

No such concerns were present in the late Ming elite circles of literati. 'We know how appalled Ricci was at the popularity of and lack of legal and social prejudice towards homosexuality in the China he visited, as well as how surprised some Chinese commentators were at the Europeans' criminalization of it' (Vitiello 2000: 251). In Ricci's T_S translation of friendship across cultures and epochs, while something is kept (e.g. the idealization of equality in friendship), something is also lost (going from an Aristotelian to a Confucian context), and something new (such as a more demarcated border between homosociality and homosexuality) is created, which in this case raises new problems.

ANALYTIC TOOLS FOR ANALYSING SOCIO-COGNITIVE CHANGES AS PART OF T_S

Translating friendship across cultures and epochs actualizes a need for better tools for analysing the semiotic changes that take place in concepts and practices of friendship. In this section, I suggest one such tool, taken from the study of conceptual change in philosophy of science in the post-Kuhnian tradition. Famously, Kuhn claimed the existence of certain forms of incommensurability between two successive paradigms, for example, that the concept of 'mass' in Einstein's theories is untranslatable to or incommensurable with mass in classical Newtonian mechanics (the word is the same but 'mass' in Einstein is another concept: mass times the square of the speed of light being equivalent to energy, $E = mc^2$).

Chen and Barker (2000) took up the artificial intelligence (AI)-inspired notion of *frames* to analyse the degree to which two similar concepts (belonging to different scientific paradigms or taxonomies) are similar or different, thus, decomposing the notion of incommensurability and allowing for a more detailed analysis of conceptual change. They showed that, if concepts are represented as AI-like frames, transformation (not to say translation) from one taxonomy to another can be achieved in a piecemeal fashion,

without a Kuhnian crisis stage, and that a new taxonomy can be generated stepwise out of the old frame. If one remembers that, while their object of analysis – scientific progress understood as changes in taxonomies, frames, concepts and theories – involves other mechanisms than the T_S translation of friendship through epochal time and cultural space (involving not just concepts but also practices, social norms and discourses), it is still possible to envision a detailed analysis of changes in the latter using a similar approach. By analysing both the cross-epochal evolving friendship tradition in philosophy, with its changing ideas about friendship, represented as frames, and this tradition's transformation into a proliferation of empirical scientific disciplines and the humanities, each with their own variant of some model of friendship, and how they contribute to our present understanding of models of ancient, medieval and modern friendship, it may be possible to construct an alternative and broader notion of T_S that also involves social, cognitive and cultural practices.

Space prohibits an extended investigation along these lines, so, just a few remarks about the components of such an analysis will do. A partial frame representation of friendship may involve 'social interpersonal relation' as a superordinate concept, and 'friendship' (of some form) as the subordinate concept, and can be represented as a specific combination of attribute-related values of each attribute. For example, the *attributes* of 'social interpersonal relation' may be 'degrees of freedom in the relation', 'formation', 'activity location', 'motivation', 'degree of idealisation' and so on. For each attribute, a set of *values* can be defined (like 'high'/'medium'/'low' for the attribute 'degrees of freedom'; 'self-chosen'/'other-chosen' for the attribute 'formation'; 'public'/'private' for the attribute 'activity location' that also refers to the visibility of the relationship; 'reproductive utility'/'other utility'/' pleasure'/'virtue'/'intimacy' for the attribute 'motivation'; 'high'/'low' for the 'degree of idealisation' attribute). Now a cluster of subordinate kinds of interpersonal relations can be characterized by their combination of attribute-related values: romantic relationship, friendship (several forms possible), marriage, patronage, political allies, religious 'brothers' or 'sisters', colleagues and so on, each characterized by differences and similarities in their combinations of attribute-related values. The next step in the analysis would be recursively analysing friendship (now as a superordinate concept) and its attributes and values in greater detail to characterize one of its forms as a sub-subordinate concept.

Though the focus in Chen and Barker (2000) was centred on theoretical concepts, the approach can be adapted to T_S by focusing on the semiosis of practices of interpersonal relationships that are partly directed by social norms and ideals. The long process of T_S of ancient virtue or guest friendship forms into modern intimate 'best' friendship can be represented by mapping the two different frames, and analysing how the change of one into another could occur stepwise, but still involve losses and adaptations in the process.

DISCUSSION OF LIMITATIONS AND CHALLENGES

How can we delimit a semiotic notion of translation of relationships through epochs, cultures and other social markers (like gender, age and ethnicity)? Are all kinds of cultural changes examples of T_S, and what about creation, growth, decay and disappearance? From the point of view of interlingual text translation, a T_N process is sharply distinguished from the creation of the text in the first place, and from its eventual loss (e.g. we have lost Aristotle's texts on poetics and botany). Should T_S not also allow for a separate semiotic notion about cultural context-dependent creation of new meaning? There is still theoretical work to be done to spell out a taxonomy of T_S forms.

We have pursued the idea of expanding the concept of translation in translation studies to cover non-linguistic forms of translation, a view compatible with and inspired by the (bio)semiotic approach to meaning-making based on sign action, not only among humans but throughout living nature. But why call processes such as 'modifying cultural practices though historical time', or 'letting ideals or practices from another culture inspire one's own' a *translation*, rather than interpretation? Referring to 'interpretative semiotics' as semiotic approach to translation within Peircean semiotics, Eco and Nergaard (1998: 219) observe that, within this approach, translation is seen 'as a subspecies of interpretation (there are, by contrast, many interpretations that cannot be strictly defined as translation)'. Thus, interpretation is the more general concept and translation a subspecies. Yet, they also paraphrase Peirce's claim that an 'interpretant is any sign which explains or "translates" the first one' (Eco and Nergaard 1998: 219), as Marais (2019) also emphasizes. We could simply suggest that modern friendship practices emerged in part by interpreting ancient ones within a new historical context, and changing them. Would it make any difference? An answer may await the development of a more detailed theory of T_S that integrates accounts for causal and hermeneutic processes, though a guess is that it depends upon what kinds of context, so the epistemic benefits of applying the perspectives of T_S are particularly pertinent to situations of cultural translation (as depicted in Figure 9.3), where different cultures meet, clash or diverge along new routes.

A challenge facing the study of changes in friendship practices through time is that we often only have written sources to rely on, and we need to consider the time- and culture-specific rhetorical styles for performing bonds that can be both instrumental and emotional. Are such styles a translational device between emotions and actions? In discussing the relation between two English spies in Bordeaux in 1590 – the exiled Anthony Standen and Francis Bacon's brother Anthony – the Renaissance researcher Will Tosh notes that

> the acquaintance developed between Standen and [Bacon] in 1591 reveals something about the nature of instrumental friendships between men, and the ease with which a mutually beneficial relationship (what we might think of today as a 'professional' acquaintanceship) could come to be draped in an affective language of loyalty and favour. This is not to suggest that such language was inauthentically applied: in the sixteenth century, relations of utility as well as emotional bonds were expressed in the highly personalised terms of intimate friendship.
>
> (Tosh 2016: 20)

Tosh argues that the 'friendship spaces' of early modern England permitted the expression of male same-sex intimacy to a greater extent than has previously been acknowledged.

The search for expanded or alternative forms of translation, when applied to human beings, runs into the same difficulty as do investigations of body language: Most often, spoken and body language are not separate, but intertwined, just as interwoven as thought and language can be. It is true, as Peirce noted, that sign action ontologically covers more than language, but in humans, our semiotic systems are intermingled. T_N is a part of T_S, and the risk of reducing all translation to interlingual translation is not the same as admitting concepts like *semiosis* and T_S the status of being most general. Children and adolescents learn to perform culture-specific practices of friendship quite early on, when they are also still learning the performance of spoken and written language. In the Renaissance, Cicero's *Letters to Friends* and *Letters to Atticus* were used, according to Will

Tosh, 'to teach Latin in schoolrooms, and the style and wit of his letters were emulated by correspondents later in life. The key was to play cleverly on the original phrases and ideas, and to draw on Cicero's philosophic and political approach, rather than slavishly imitate his sentences' (p. 31). This applies to our spy Anthony and his friend Faunt, as Tosh observes, '[w]hen Anthony made "comparison of our well grounded frendshippe with that we find to have bene betweene Tully [Cicero] and Atticus", Faunt [his epistolary friend] was delighted' (p. 46), because it 'lifted the nature of their relationship from the estimable field of friendships in general, to the heights of the virtuous friendship *par excellence*' (p. 46). If we had access to the right performative resources and a modicum of emotional intelligence, ancient models of friendship could be T_S-translated into contemporary trust and intimacy.

CONCLUSION

It is likely that people have always made friends, but as exemplified by the cases we have discussed, such relationships have been approached differently by different people, times, cultures and disciplines, so as to make the extent to which we can talk about 'the same' phenomenon contested. However, this situation offers us a rich phenomenology, amendable for a taxonomy of the fluid forms of this whole cluster of relationship types and their translational metamorphoses, now receiving an increased interdisciplinary attention from fields such as history, anthropology, philosophy, sociology and psychology. It was argued that a theoretically more general concept of translation, T_S, covering not just interlingual but cross-cultural and cross-epochal translational processes, semiotically conceived, can help to make sense of friendship as a universal relational semiotic phenomenon, expressed and performed in a variety of context-dependent modes across cultural times and spaces. Cases such as those we discussed provide data for such an idea, if not a theory, of translated friendship in which this relational phenomenon is seen as a configuration of practices, norms and ideals, sociopsychological attitudes, obligations, expectations and ways of performing this relationship, not only verbally but also emotionally, embodied and embedded within cultural matrices. Thus, a more advanced theory of general translation could serve to develop a notion of normative interpersonal configurations as both social and psychological dispositions to behave (or practice social action) in some particular manners, following patterns that allow the translation and transformation of these patterns across psychological and social space and time. Friendship configurations could, thus, be grasped as evolving across 'big' (historical) times and (cultural) spaces, and to one of our initial questions, we can answer yes: There is a general story of friendship to be told, translated and retranslated many times.

NOTES

1 Herman (1987: 61), *cf*. the discussion below on the symbols of ritualized friendship.

2 In citations, CP is followed by the volume, and paragraph number of Peirce (1932, 1933, 1935 or 1958).

3 The view of translation as involving interpretation and, thus, semiosis, is a relatively uncontroversial view in translation studies (Eco and Nergaard 1998); what is alternative in T_S, as developed here and in Marais (2019), is that interpretation can be of other signs

than lingual ones, and that whenever spoken or written language is involved, it is with an emphasis upon the embeddedness of intertextual translation within broader practices of transmission across time and space.

4 Shmoop University Inc. at https://www.shmoop.com/decameron/friendship-quotes.html (accessed October 2020; can also be found at www.archive.org).

5 Smit and Morrison (2010); Prusiński (2018); see also https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Friends_with_benefits

6 For such a third position, *cf*. Pym and Turk (1998).

7 For treatments within translation studies of 'cultural translation', see, for example Buden et al. (2009), Bandia (2014), Maitland (2017) and (with an emphasis on the external origins of this notion) Conway (2019).

8 This is pointed out in the entry on *interpretatio graeca* in the en.wikipedia.org that contains such a detailed list.

9 See Schechner and Brady (2013: 38*ff*) for a discussion about 'is' and 'as' performance. Much more can be studied 'as' performance than what a given culture or some circumstances typically see 'is' performance. The general point (also relevant for translation studies) is that '[e]verything and anything can be studied "as" any discipline of study – physics, economics, law, etc. What the "as" says is that the object of study will be regarded "from the perspective of," "in terms of," "interrogated by" a particular discipline of study' (Schechner and Brady 2013: 42). By the way, there are obvious intersections between translation studies and performance studies; for example, hybrid performances (which incorporate elements from two or more different cultures or cultural sources) can be studied as alternative forms of translation.

10 In such a perspective upon, for instance, the emergence of the Renaissance of the twelfth century, the T_N of ancient Greek texts (related to an increased contact with the Islamic world in Spain, and with Byzantium, that allowed Europeans to translate works of Hellenic and Islamic authors, especially Aristotle) was embedded in a more complex T_S of an ancient worldview into a Christian worldview. The T_S of the philosophy of friendship was part of this. In implying, but not explicating, a distinction between T_N and T_S, David Konstan (1997) comments upon Derrida's remark that, though Hegel's Idea is not Plato's Idea, 'the word *Idea* is not an arbitrary X, and it bears a traditional burden that continues Plato's system in Hegel's system' (p. 10), and states (p. 11) that 'The instabilities in both the ancient and the modern senses of the term "friend," which are precisely what endow it with a history, demand an approach that reckons with the transformations within a concept that has been shown to be in some essential respect continuous'. Thus, a history of ideas about meaning (like the one by Deely 2001) can be seen as reconstructing a complex network of translation processes about theories of meaning, from ancient times to the present day.

11 For a popular introduction to this body of research, see Denworth (2020), *cf*. also Seyfarth and Cheney (2012), Brent et al. (2014). Scholars from the humanities are often wary about the evidence needed to infer real friendship (excluding simpler tit-for-tat strategies) in non-human animals, and judge it 'very difficult to extract which mechanism is actually underwriting the observed pattern of reciprocity' in apes (Hruschka 2010: 210). This is contrasted with human friends' 'relative insensitivity to past behaviour and future payoffs' when helping a friend; a pattern which is seen as 'puzzling from an evolutionary perspective that emphasizes survival of the fittest' (Hruschka 2010: 29).

12 For an extensive survey of the literature, see Hruschka (2010), who also drew on a database on peasant and small-scale societies around the world, to find four friendship characteristics surviving comparisons with the many characteristics of friendship in modern industrialized societies: mutual aid, need-based helping, positive affect and gift-giving among partners.

13 One can expect that the existence of urban lifestyles and strong institutions affect the private/public location of friendship and its practices (Österberg 2010). As noted by Henrich (2020: 22), urban, industrialized, educated people 'show relatively less favouritism toward our friends, families, co-ethnics, and local communities than other populations do. We think nepotism is wrong, and fetishize abstract principles over context, practicality, relationships, and expediency'.

14 This conception is in line with Marais (2019: 57 and Chapter 4).

15 This scaffolding depends also upon the particular styles of reflection for each individual (Emmeche 2015). For use of Peircean semiotics to analyse the friendship relation, see Emmeche (2014, 2017). Hofstadter (2007: 354) suggests that 'the most crucial factor' for where to draw the line for applying the word 'conscious' is 'whether or not the entity in question could be said to have some notion, perhaps only very primitive, of "friend", a friend being someone you care about and who cares about you'. I thank Kalevi Kull for reminding me of Hofstadter's suggestion.

16 Different 'turns' in the humanities may be conceived of as T_S translations, whereby a field or paradigm that imports new theoretical perspectives is translated into a different paradigm (according to Konstan, 'classics came to be invaded by anthropology!'; see him interviewed by Philip Mitsis at NYU Abu Dhabi Institute, 17 October 2012, on the occasion of the publication of an Arabic translation of Konstan (1997): https://youtu.be/O3rGjUlFcQY. The anthropological impact on classic studies is visible in Finley (1977) and Herman (1987), *cf*. below.

17 Brain (1977) for a comparative anthropological account that emphasizes a variety of forms, *cf*. also Hruschka (2010).

18 See James Underhill's interview, 'In Conversation with Anna Wierzbicka – How English Shapes Our Anglo World' at https://youtu.be/jCw3dfmgP-0

19 See critique in Ramson (2001), reply in Wierzbicka (2001). Using the more recent *Google's ngram viewer* (https://books.google.com/ngrams) on constructions like 'dear friend', 'best friend', 'good friend' and 'close friend' only partly confirms Wierzbicka's claims; 'close friend' shows a long but very slow increase in use from 1850, while 'best friend' dramatically increased in frequency since 1980 (corpus: googlebooks-eng-20200217). The same source shows relative constancy of the 'friend of mine' construction, in contrast to what Wierzbicka claimed, but confirms her sense that the 'my friend' construction is decreasing.

20 It can be objected that the assumption that some English simple words are somehow universally translatable is questionable; for a critique, see Blumczyński (2013). I thank an anonymous reviewer for raising this point.

21 See https://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ungleichzeitigkeit and https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Non-simultaneity.

22 *cf*. Carrithers (2010), an entry that also draws upon Kumar (1992).

23 This demand for translation is understandable. Especially in non-Western collectivist (so-called regulated-relational) (*cf*. Henrich 2020) societies, you don't trust strangers

enough to simply voluntarily give away pieces of personal information. You want mutuality in relations of exchange, as in a gift economy. Science and scholarship can also be considered as gift economies, as pointed out by sociologists of science Robert K. Merton and Warren O. Hagström. The scientist gives away a new piece of knowledge to the scientific community and hopes to get back recognition and merit. The pieces of 'data' anthropologists are eager to pick up from their informants are, thus, met by a demand for a more mutual form of exchange: a kind of recognition that takes the form of friendship.

24 There is little literature on friendship as a method in anthropology (e.g. Tillmann-Healy 2003). Some anthropologists think that friendship is 'an essential part of the very practice of ethnography' (Eva van Roekel, interview at https://medium.com/find-out-why/the-study-of-friendship-in-anthropology-d957d5583c3c). Anthropologists are, in general, ambivalent about this, and wary about giving informants material support in exchange for information. The European Association of Social Anthropologists (EASA) has, to date (year 2020), not created ethical guidelines on this or other issues; the American Anthropological Association has a 'Code of Ethics' (approved June 1998), which is silent about payment and about friendship.

25 This is, in fact, an extension of patron-client ties of the ancient world, thus, pointing to both continuity (regarding the 'vertical' power-dimension of unequal friendship types) and break (regarding its 'horizontal' dimension) in the translation of friendship from the ancient to medieval times. On the situation in medieval Northern Europe, *cf*. Hermanson's illuminative account: 'The Icelandic chieftains' subject farmers were tied to their lords through bonds of friendship. Among intellectuals, the relationship between mentor and disciple was one of friendship. The same was true in classical Greco-Roman societies where the vertical ties between patron and clients were described in terms of friendship' (Hermanson 2019: 140).

26 For further discussion, see Allan Silver's work, for example Silver (1990, 1997). See also Hill and McCarthy (2000).

27 For an elaboration, see Meilaender (1981), who points to five contrasts that we can see as influencing T_S: (1) *Philia* as preferential versus *agape* as nonpreferential; (2) *philia* demands reciprocity, while *agape* needs to be shown to the enemy from whom no love is expected to be returned; (3) *philia* can change, while *agape* is eternal; (4) *philia* and 'civic friendship' were noble things in the ancient world, but the modern political bond of justice must be impartial and impersonal; and (5) *philia* was preeminent when work had little personal significance, while *agape* helped shape a world in which vocation was seen as a very important form of service to neighbour. The implication, as shown by Grayling (2013: 61–75), is that, though we can look 'at any Christian website on friendship and see familiar [reasonable] things being said', when they are subordinated to the Christian doctrine, this becomes incoherent and devalued.

28 Österberg (2010: 78).

29 In Ancient Greece, it was a virtue, or moral code in the broadest sense, to help one's friends to harm their enemies; see Blundel (1989: 39), who notices that 'we are less inclined than the ancient Greeks to divide up our world between friends and enemies'. This idea may be related to a modern emergence of the figure of a non-dangerous, completely neutral stranger, *cf*. Silver (1990, 1997).

30 Since Burns's assessment, new, important scholarship on friendship in Imperial China has been published, e.g. Wang (2017), Chu (2017), Kutcher (2000), Vitiello (2000), Huang (2007a) and Shields (2015).

31 There was a distinct concept of friendship in Confucius, namely that friendship is a 'one-directional relationship in which one extends oneself by association with one who has attained a higher level of realization' (Hall and Ames 1994: 91); it was, thus, a very different idea, not about an equal, but about a more hierarchical relationship (*cf.* Kutcher 2000).

32 Ricci became the first European to enter the Forbidden City of Beijing in 1601, upon invitation by the Wanli Emperor, who sought his services in matters of court astronomy and calendrical science; in 1602 Ricci created a map of the world written in Chinese characters. He converted several prominent Chinese officials to Catholicism. He also worked with the Chinese elites, such as Xu Guangqi, to translate Euclid's Elements into Chinese, as well as the Confucian classics into Latin – for the first time in history. On the role of Ricci's and other Jesuits' translations in that Sino-European cultural exchange, see Hsia (2007). Ricci's project of winning the hearts and minds of the locals can also be described as translating their Confucianism into an incomplete but yet close-to-perfect version of Christian faith, so their eventual conversion would not be a big step. For details, see Chu (2017), Billings (2009), Hsia (2007) and Wikipedia's entry on Ricci's approach to Chinese culture.

33 In part memorized by him, in part by his access to *Sententia et exempla*, a sixteenth-century Latin 'commonplace book' by Andreas Eborensis (1498–1573), *cf.* Billings (2009: 8 and note 9).

34 As Chu (2017, fn. 10) notes with McDermott (1992), it is Eurocentric to claim that late Ming discussions of friendship were stimulated and even influenced by Matteo Ricci's translation of classical Greek and Latin authors' observations on the same theme. Yet, there was huge interest in Ricci's pamphlet and it became included in the Chinese *collectanea – congshu*, i.e. collected editions of books whose inclusion attests to their canonical status.

35 This 'larger part' is also what brings home the message by Burke about translating histories, namely, 'the interlingual translation of historians was at the same time a form of cultural translation, in other words an adaptation to the needs, interests, prejudices and ways of reading of the target culture, or at least of some groups within it' (Burke 2007b: 133).

36 According to the ethics of Confucius, one needs to respect the 'five cardinal human relationships' (*wulun*), that is, those between ruler and minister, between father and son, between elder and younger brothers, between husband and wife, and, finally, between friends. Only friendship was (or might have been) seen and practiced as non-hierarchical, and was traditionally deemed the least essential of the five. After quoting Gu Xiancheng (1550–1612), a Ming dynasty educator who offers a persuasive argument about the importance of friendship in the context of *wulun*, Martin Huang (2007b: 170, note 77) comments on a 'substantially' different translation of the same passages by McDermott (1992), and states that 'I do not see in the original text the kind of strong sense of equality as McDermott has apparently seen. Personally, I believe McDermott has probably made Gu Xiancheng's view on friendship more "modern" as well as "Western" than it actually was'.

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