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Varieties of friendship

Interdisciplinary perspectives
on social relationships

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Contents

Ronald G. Asch Preface	9
Bernadette Descharmes / Eric A. Heuser / Caroline Krüger / Thomas Loy Preface	11
Heather Devere Introduction. The Resurrection Of Political Friendship: Making Connections	17
Semantics and Conceptions	
Julian P. Haseldine Friends or <i>amici</i> ? <i>Amicitia</i> and monastic letter-writing in the twelfth century	43
Christian Kühner “Quand je retournai, je trouvai toutes les cabales de la cour changées”: Friendship under the Conditions of Seventeenth-Century Court Society .	59
Tanja Zeeb Moralist Concepts of Friendship: An Interplay of Stability and Dynamism	77
Simon Meier „Nur im Gespräch können Freunde einander finden“ – Zur Reaktualisierung des Freundschaftsdiskurses in der modernen Konversationstheorie	97

Danny Kaplan Chemistry and Alchemy: Narrative Building Blocks of Friendship and Nationalism in Israeli Culture	119
--	-----

Practices of Friendship

Agnes Brandt / Eric Anton Heuser Friendship and socio-cultural context. Experiences from New Zealand and Indonesia	145
--	-----

Sebastian Kühn “We have not fail’d to remember you on all occasions & to drink constantly your health” – Drinking Rituals and the Social Model of Triads in Early Modern Scholarly Friendship	175
--	-----

Laura Polexe „In alter Freundschaft, Dein Baron“ – Die Freundschaft zwischen den Sozialdemokraten Karl Kautsky und Pavel Aksel’rod	191
--	-----

Vincent Leuschner Playing the field – dealing with interpersonal relationships in the political arena	205
---	-----

Judith Gurr Politics, Emotions, and Rationality. The Thatcher-Reagan and the Blair-Brown Relationship	223
---	-----

Patronage and Corruption

Iskra Gencheva-Mikami <i>Self at Play: Friendship and Patronage under Female Rulers</i>	239
--	-----

Ronald G. Asch Freundschaft und Patronage zwischen alteuropäischer Tradition und Moderne: Frühneuzeitliche Fragestellungen und Befunde	265
--	-----

Niels Grüne <i>Freundschaft, Privatheit und Korruption. Zur Disqualifizierung sozialer Nähe im Kräftefeld frühmoderner Staatlichkeit</i>	287
---	-----

Dietmar Neutatz

Stalin als Freund? Überlegungen zu den persönlichen Nahbeziehungen
im Politbüro der 1930er und 1940er Jahre 309

Limits and Transgressions of Friendship

Ana Claudia Marques

Intrigas and *Questões*. Blood Revenge and Social Network in
Pernambuco, Brazil 337

Tilo Grätz

Social-Anthropological Perspectives on Friendship in Africa 355

Bernadette Descharmes

philia und *prodosia* – Grenzen der Freundschaft in den Texten der
attischen Tragödie *oder* Ein Versuch über den Verrat 377

Ronald G. Asch

Preface

The *Graduiertenkolleg* (Research Training Group) FRIENDS, PATRONS, FOLLOWERS: The practice and semantics of friendship and patronage in comparative historical and anthropological perspective was founded in 2006 at the university of Freiburg. Generously financed by the *Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft* (German Research Council) it comprises both graduate students and senior academics from a wide range of disciplines, that is history (ranging from ancient to contemporary history), philosophy, sociology, political science, cultural anthropology (*Ethnologie*) and literature studies. It is presently about to embark on the second phase of its research – another four years and half. The *Graduiertenkolleg* is concentrating in its work on personal relations that go beyond the context of family and kinship in different historical periods and different cultures, covering symmetrical ties of loyalty (between equals) as well as asymmetrical ones. Such personal or face-to-face social relations are clearly a phenomenon, which we encounter in all societies and cultures in different forms. Our project deliberately looks at both friendship and patronage. Only in combining both fields of research can the origins of the modern ideal of a totally symmetrical emotional and affective friendship, which is not marred by any notions of self-interest, be explained in historical context, while at the same time trying to avoid an approach that looks at patronage in pre-modern societies only as a means of self advancement without any emotional content. The project also aims to re-assess the role of friendship in modern societies, which is often considered as a marginal, purely private phenomenon without any clear institutional framework. In future, associations of friends in their various forms – which of course frequently also created patronage relationships – are to become more central for our work. Next to friendship itself fraternity as a sort of artificial kinship constituted by personal ties is now to be one of the problems we want to focus on. The function of friendship as a relationship which defines the identity of the persons involved in it will be a further focus of our work in the next four years.

The present volume is the first in a series presenting the work of the Research Training Group to an academic audience. The series will comprise both a substantial number of the theses which our graduates completed during their time in the *Kolleg* and the proceedings of the conferences organized by the graduates and the senior researchers at regular intervals. We hope that this volume and the ones to follow will let the reader participate in our work and our discussions and make a significant contribution to research on a subject which – in the case of friendship at least– has for a long time been neglected in academic debates.

Bernadette Descharmes / Eric A. Heuser / Caroline Krüger /
Thomas Loy

Preface

The topic of friendship has experienced rather high popularity in academic discussions over the past years. This edited volume is one of the outcomes of an on-going academic debate on the importance of friendship, its related social relationships such as patronage, and their anthropological and historical cultural phenomena over time.

In July 2009, the interdisciplinary research training group “Friends, Patrons, Followers” funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG) held an international conference on the topics in Freiburg/Breisgau, Germany. The conference was characterised by the interdisciplinary atmosphere that had framed the work of the research training group and contributed to furthering innovative debates on friendship and related topics.

The conference brought together scholars from disciplines as different as literature studies, medieval studies, history, politics, philosophy, sociology, social anthropology. Related herewith were widely varying conceptions, understandings and theoretical framings of friendship that reflected the tradition of the different disciplines. Naturally, this called for intensified debates on the conceptions and theoretical presumptions that all of us brought into the discussions, coming from various disciplinary backgrounds. Soon it became clear, that a transdisciplinary definition of friendship would not be the outcome of the research training group, nor would be a desirable end for the conference. As a result, this volume will carry on our idea of an on-going and open debate on friendship, patronage and allegiance. Rather than working towards pinning the social phenomena we investigated down in definitions, we set and continue to discuss their practices, cultural configurations and their different perceptions across cultural boundaries, social stratifications, and different historical epochs.

While we were editing this volume, an old and familiar question in regard to friendship that had accompanied us over the years came up again:

Could it sound too trivial if we discuss words and conceptions such as guests, patrons and friends? Not very innovative we thought. But the longer we thought

about it the more appropriate and timely it appeared to us. No matter where we look: friendship, patronage and allegiance relationships are everywhere. Historical accounts, literature, and the oral histories of non-Western societies provide us with rich sources of non-kinship affectionate relationships. They underline that there is a profound difference whether someone addresses you as friend, guest or patron or maybe even as a follower. The words chosen and the attached practices reveal significant information on the relationship, or better yet: they provide detailed accounts about our own conception of the relationships we have with others. They illuminate the structural characteristics in terms of a more symmetrical or asymmetrical relationship, which again reveal some of the cultural practices of social relationships, their importance in one society, and their probably very different connotation in another cultural setting. Languages as well as social practices also give insights into aspects of social space, social role expectations, conceptions of relatedness, and finally tell us something about affection and emotions.

Some of these conceptions were discussed more closely in the research training group as well as at the conference; some of them could hardly be focused on. The papers in this volume are the attempt to provide some of the multifaceted discussions of the conference and to account for the variety within in the field of friendship research.

Our research results suggest it would be unsound to provide readers with a concluding chapter that moves towards a more exclusive, but, given the complexity of the topic, necessarily insufficient definition of friendship or patronage. While this interdisciplinary approach highlights a variety of elements of social phenomena, we resisted the comprehensible, but rather positivist question and answer of what friendship “really” is. Rather than perceiving the different articles in this volume as disconnected approaches, we see this compilation as a contribution to a growing and much needed interdisciplinary discussion of the social phenomena of friendship, patronage and allegiance.

An interdisciplinary approach to researching friendship is much needed, as friendship comes to the fore as a relationship that is often embedded in, or functioning in close “neighbourhood” to other forms of social organisation. This particular characteristic of friendship makes it a highly relevant, but also a very complex research topic. The research training group held a workshop entitled “Concepts of Friendship” that was designed to address the topic of the intersecting moments of different social relations. The discussions focused on possible transgressions and on friendship and patronage bonds. The goal was to allow for more inclusive perceptions of friendship and work towards overcoming often binary oppositions like patron or friendship and sexual relationship or non-sexual affectionate homosocial bonds. So what about the highly problematic issue of sex with a friend? Can such relationships still be referred to

as friendship? Do they become something else: are they possibly new emerging transgressive forms of friendship? And what happens if friends betray one another? What if there is not the dyadic relationship, but a third entering the circle of intimacy, turning the powerful dyadic ideal of intimate friendship upside down?

The members of the research training group, as well as contributors to the conference agreed that friendship as an interpersonal relationship cannot be discussed appropriately as detached from other social relations. This fact was inspiration for us to put together papers that analyse the interdependence, intersections and transgressions with other social relationships. However, the following question to this would be: How can we conceptualise friendship when the relation itself is characterised by on-going alternations, adaptations to situations and subject to cultural configurations? What these questions and thoughts mentioned here imply, is that friendships unfold around the central points of body, intimacy, desire and, on a more theoretical level, boundary crossings, or as we have called it in one of the following chapters: transgressions.

Non-European and pre-modern societies' physical closeness in friendship is quickly accounted for by referring to public social gestures that are – so the argument often put forward – not related to body and emotions. The vast variety of friendship constructs that are discussed in this volume made us question this academic reflex. They forced us to open the field for more inclusive friendship conceptions and ask back: how personal, how close can friendships as interpersonal relationships be?

The following papers do not present or even correspond with a single concept of friendship. What they all have in common is that they understand friendship as an intimate relationship that is based on relatively free association. As readers will see, friendship is often used as a label for different forms of close interpersonal relationships of varying social dynamics. The editors of this volume would like to direct the readers' attention to the boundaries that seem to differentiate friendship from other forms of social relationships that, as the papers show, exist in close proximity to friendships. Promoting an interdisciplinary approach to friendship research as the one presented here, is able to frame the phenomenon's social complexity and might be able to arrive at a more inclusive perception. This approach, so we argue, is much needed in order to challenge Eurocentric and historically idealised definitions of friendship. Friendship research of this kind takes into account an analysis of the delicate shifts, transgressions, and boundary-crossings between friendship, patronage, sexual and romantic relationship, and business ties.

Addressing these topics, the volume is divided into sections reflecting the topics that appeared as most relevant to the research training group's result as well as the major topics debated at the conference.

Heather Devere's *Introduction* critically discusses friendship research over the past decades, detecting a resurrection of friendship as a topic of scholarly interest in recent years. In her theoretical overview she stresses the importance the topic holds for human interaction as well as for public discourses

The first section *Semantics and Conceptions* comprises articles that concentrate on discourses of friendship in philosophical, historical, and contemporary perspectives. Julian Haseldine analyses monastic letters among clerics in twelfth century's France. The relation between notions of friendship and courtly culture during the time of Louis XIV is analysed by Christian Kühner. Tanja Zeeb's paper focuses on notions of friendship in French philosophy from the early moralists to the post-structuralist era (Foucault). Investigating twentieth century conversation theory texts, Simon Meier explores friendships conceptualisations and idealisations. Danny Kaplan's paper relates local Zionist conceptions of friendship in Israel to political discourses framing ideals of national solidarity.

In *Practices of Friendship* various papers highlight aspects of friendship within different cultural, historical and political contexts. Cross-cultural friendship relations in Indonesia and New Zealand are discussed by Agnes Brand and Eric Heuser, analysing the cultural embeddedness of friendship conceptions. Sebastian Kühn examines drinking rituals among scholars in early modern society with a focus on how absent friends are being included by various practices. Laura Polexe describes the friendship between the social democrats Pavel Aksel'rod and Karl Kautsky, both immigrants who lived and worked in Switzerland. Vincent Leuschner's paper is concerned with the establishment of political networks in among members of the German Bundestag (parliament). Friendship in politics is also the topic of Judith Gurr's investigation, which takes the Blair-Brown and the Reagan-Thatcher-relationship as prominent examples for the intertwining of intimate bonds and political ties.

Patronage and Corruption deals with asymmetrical interpersonal relationships that are mainly defined by the exchange of goods and benefits. Female rulership in Early Japan is at the centre of attention in the section's first paper by Iskra Gencheva-Mikami. Ronald G. Asch approaches the issue of symmetrical and asymmetrical ties by observing transformations of friendship and patronage conceptions from Early Modern Europe to Modern European society. In the context of the development of European nation-states and related notions of privacy, Nils Grüne discusses contemporary criticism of corruption in the Early Modern Period. The subject of Dietmar Neutatz' paper is twentieth century politics. It presents Stalin, his followers and their practices of creating notions of closeness to the political leader.

The last section *Limits and Transgressions of Friendship* focuses on the boundaries of friendship and other social relationships. It investigates phe-

nomena like inter-ethnic friendship, violence and practices that challenge existing friendship bonds. Ana Claudia Marques presents the cohesive and divisive dynamics within the context of blood feud in Brazil, underlining the important position that friendship takes in those conflicts. In his social-anthropological inquiry Thilo Grätz draws on case studies in West-African societies illuminating the particular values in local friendship conceptions. Bernadette Descharmes presents the limits of *philia*, the Greek concept of amiable relationships, by the act of betrayal as depicted in Greek tragedy.

Introduction.

The Resurrection Of Political Friendship: Making Connections

Friendship and politics have been seen as incompatible in contemporary discourse. The connotations are usually negative. As Tegos puts it “everybody knows that politics means cunning, slyness and violence, so it’s more intuitive to talk about politics of enmity than politics of friendship”.¹ Friendship seems to be tainted by association with politics, and the idea of intimate relationships involving partiality operating in politics is at odds with democratic values of objective justice and impartial individualism. Friendship in politics is associated with nepotism and favoritism, allowing unjust and unequal access to decision-makers and resources. It seems inappropriate to encourage intimate personal relationships in the public sphere, although friendship as a metaphor in political discourse is more acceptable for international alliances or relationships between nations as treaties and alliances are often referred to as ‘friendships’.²

Despite an increasing democratization of global politics, concern has been mounting from both academics and activists that the forms and workings of our current democracies are producing increasing inequality both within western societies and between the west and the east, as well as increasing violence both within and between states, and within and between other political groups. Emerging from these concerns has been a growing interest, politically and academically, in reviewing values and focusing on human interaction, connections, emotions and relationships, rather than prioritizing independence, atomization, objectivism and individualism. Challenges come from all spheres and there are several approaches which have converged that allow or encourage

1 Spiros TEGOS: Politics of friendship as a politics of compromise? Paper presented at the European Consortium for Political Research Joint Sessions, Granada, Workshop “The Politics of Friendship”, 14–19 April, 2005, 1.

2 See for example Yevgeny ROSHCHIN: Friendship as a Constitutive Element of International Order; Heather DEVERE/Simon MARK/Jane VERBITSKY: The Language of Friendship in International Treaties (2007). Papers presented at the Workshop on Friendship in International Relations, IX Congress of the French Association of Political Science, Toulouse, September 5–7, 2007.

the re-inclusion of friendship within political discourse. I will be arguing that the intersection of the political and social movements and philosophies of feminism, post-colonialism, indigeneity, communitarianism and post-modernism, which re-evaluate individualist ideologies and ethics, as well as developments in modern psychology which focus on the importance of relationships, have combined to provide a climate in which friendship has re-emerged as a topic relevant for academic consideration in relation to the political. I will not be providing an exclusive definition of friendship in this account, but incorporate references to various forms of social relatedness, such as fraternity, care, affective reciprocity, love and community identity, that connect and overlap with friendship and provide a backdrop to the focus on friendship.

The Democracy / Friendship Connection

Democracy has been the dominant political system of the Western world since the Enlightenment and is based on equal rights, individual liberty and justice. As the Greek origin of the word indicates, democracy is the control of the government by ‘the many’ rather than by ‘the few’; ‘by the people’ rather than the various elites. In the writings about the political democracy of the Ancient Greek states, friendship was discussed as an important element of politics and essential for the democratic system that was in place. The various elements of democratic theory are themselves ambiguous, contradictory, complex and intertwined. At the beginning of the 21st century, democracy is, according to Post, ‘often used as an elastic synonym for good government, stretching to include whatever is desirable in a state’.³ Friendship has not had prominence in this modern democratic debate.

The period of modern democracy can be traced back to 17th century Europe and the Enlightenment. While the French Revolutionaries included *fraternité*, or brotherhood in their revolutionary slogan, the political debate of the last few centuries has focused mainly on the interplay between equality and freedom, with the concept associated with relationships being less evident. The individual rather than the community – separateness rather than connectedness – has dominated Western political discourse.

Lukes, whose 1973 text entitled *Individualism* is an attempt to “indicate both the variety and the directions of the main paths traced during the term’s rich semantic history”,⁴ singles out four ‘unit-ideas’ of individualism: respect for

3 Robert Post: Democracy and Equality. In: Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science 603:1 January, 2006, 24.

4 Steven Lukes: Individualism. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1993, 1.

human dignity, autonomy, privacy, and self-development, and then argues that these are essential for both equality and liberty. It is the tension between liberty and equality, both challenges to elitism, which has formed the basis of an extensive literature on democratic theory.⁵

Until the end of the 20th century, the third element within the call for democracy that had been made by the French partisans – fraternity – had not been a visible part of the intellectual debate on democracy or politics. The concept of fraternity has not usually been seen as vital for democracy. There is now some revival of debate about the neglected third slogan in the ‘triad of the French revolution’⁶ and there are suggestions that without including fraternity in the model of democracy, has created what Payutto has referred to “a chronic condition in American society”.⁷ It is argued that without fraternity, both equality and liberty are compromised. A lack of fellow feeling and mistrust mean that unequal treatment is resented which leads to divisiveness. Suspicion and fear then serve to limit liberty.

Kruger argues that fraternity has been ‘the submerged object of politics’ and that every time politicians invoke the concept of ‘community’ they are in fact talking about fraternity, which according to him is:

[...] the sphere of belonging, of membership, the sphere of identity and particularity. It exists in society, in the arena of commercial and social enterprise, of family and nation. It concerns neighbourhood, voluntary association, faith, and all the other elements of identity that relate us to some and distinguish us from others. It concerns culture.⁸

For him then, while liberty and fraternity “may be in tension [...] they are not incompatible”. In fact, he claims that “liberty needs fraternity”. He equates fraternity with localism and ‘self-regulating clubs of experts’ which are at the base of British conservative society. Kruger also claims that fraternity is part of the tradition of the Labour party as well. He suggests that in opposition, Blair and Brown also revived the tradition of fraternity within the early socialism of the Labour movement based on the local socialism of trade unions and friendly societies, the mutuals and self-help clubs that supplied the collective needs of urban workers before the age of welfare.⁹

However, there is a feminist objection to equating fraternity with democracy

5 Ibid, x.

6 Danny KRUGER: The right dialectic. In: Prospect Magazine, September, 2006, 126.

7 Ven P.A. PAYUTTO: Buddhist Solutions for the Twenty-First Century. Trans Bruce Evans, Buddhadhamma Foundatio, 1994, 3. <http://www.geocities.com/cmdsg/geo/payutto.htm?200715>.

8 KRUGER, op.cit., 126.

9 Idem.

because of the gendered nature of fraternity and an epistemology which is related to male brotherhood.

The Feminist / Friendship Connection

In terms of critiquing the orthodoxy, the women's movement of the 1970s, as well as continually evolving feminist theory, and the feminist intellectual project have all been particularly influential in re-conceptualizing politics. One of the aims of the feminist movement has been to ensure that women and other groups which have been excluded from the white middle-class patriarchy are brought into the debate, and one way of doing this is summed up in the catch-cry of the women's movement – 'the personal is political'. By arguing that politics, which is concerned with the distribution of resources, needs to be inclusive, inequalities which exist in private, personal relationships were brought into the public realm for scrutiny. This legitimized political debate and academic inquiry about human interaction, not only among the elite and powerful, but also among and between those without political, economic or social power. Susan Magarey, looking back to the Women's Liberation movement in Australia, describes it thus:

Women's Liberation's claims and visions were all-encompassing; the liberation of women meant total transformation of whole societies, and elimination of power differences between white and black, first and third world, employer and worker, even parent and child, and – the new, unanticipated coda which the Women's Liberation Movement introduced – between men and women. Moreover, because Women's Liberation was a movement of women, women began to talk with each other, to form political solidarities with each other, and also, instead of rivalries around patriarchal prizes, friendships [...].¹⁰

Feminist historical investigations reveal centuries of the social exclusion of women, and that the values and perspectives of women have been missing from political discourse and the recorded history of political action. The introduction of the concept of 'friendship' into political debate, avoids some of the exclusivity of fraternity. Janice Raymond contributes to the feminist project of locating the history of women by incorporating an analysis of the friendship between women. In *A Passion for Friends* she argues that it is in fact friendship that has provided women with the basis for their world, and for their self creation. She examines a cross-section of women's societies in the past, including the pros-

10 Susan MAGAREY: *Feminism as Cultural Renaissance*. In: *Hecate* 30:1, 2004, 235.

titude *hetairai* of antiquity, the nuns of medieval Europe and the Chinese women who resisted marriage.¹¹

Marilyn Friedman writing on feminism and friendship acknowledges that defects that individualism brings to modern democracy might be offset by looking at more communal arrangements for society. However, she is also aware that there are dangers for women and feminist theory of accepting the importance of community without ensuring that women's self identity is preserved. Friedman argues that feminists have asserted "a social conception of the self" which challenges the abstractive individualist view of Western democracy yet allows the concepts of connection and friendship to flourish.¹² She proposes that the adoption of her model of modern friendship could make communitarianism a "more congenial ally for feminist theory."¹³

While it is only relatively recently that there have been explicit writings on women and friendship, the merging of the private and public spheres which has helped to politicize discrimination and inequity within personal relationships is one of the threads of influence which brings together friendship and politics.

The Communitarian / Friendship Connection

Communitarianism is a philosophical and political challenge to the way politics is conducted which valorises the community over the individual. Communitarianism is a Western challenge which acknowledges the importance of group politics and critiques both authoritarianism and individualism as offering a false dichotomy for politics, advocating a "need for a new agenda for politics and citizenship", which is more inclusive, both socially and politically, in order to "overcome the corrosive effects of individualism, and protect all citizens from authoritarian threats".¹⁴

Communitarians challenge the ideology of liberalism which dominates late 20th century and early 21st century Western politics. They disagree that justice can only be achieved by individual autonomous citizens competing for inalienable rights. Instead, they argue that the focus for politics should be on seeking out connections and association between participants in a particular

11 Janice RAYMOND: *A Passion for Friends: Toward a Philosophy of Female Affection*. London: The Women's Press Ltd, 1986.

12 Marilyn FRIEDMAN: *Feminism and Modern Friendship: Dislocating the Community*. In: *Friendship: A Philosophical Reader*. Neera Kapur BADHWAR (ed.) Ithica: Cornell University Press, 1993, 286.

13 *Ibid*, 287.

14 Henry TAM: *Communitarianism: A New Agenda for Politics and Citizenship*. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1998, 2.

community, in order to achieve a just society. One approach is to reassess the origins of democracy. Aristotelian writings are considered to promote ideals which are relevant for contemporary society. Aristotle considered, for example, that combining friendship and politics was essential for the development of democracy in the Greek city state of Athens. In his inquiry into politics, which he identifies as being an exploration of ‘what is highest of all goods achievable by action’, Aristotle, drawing on earlier Greek writers, emphasizes the role of justice, and argues that friendship is natural, noble and essential for justice:

[...] when men are friends they have no need of justice, while when they are just they need friendship as well, and the truest form of justice is thought to be a friendly quality.¹⁵

Michael Sandel, building on Aristotle, argues that where there is affection, benevolence or fraternity:

[i]ndividual rights and fair decision procedures are seldom invoked, not because injustice is rampant but because their appeal is pre-empted by a spirit of generosity [...].¹⁶

Another communitarian, Philip Selznick, also confirms commitment to social justice as a moral imperative. As part of this he claims that “belonging is a mainstay of justice” and that mutuality creates “the moral infrastructure of cooperation”.¹⁷ Selznick argues that mutuality and reciprocity are necessary for the sustenance of community, as “if people do not need each other, if little or nothing is to be gained from exchanging benefits and cooperating for common purpose, community is not likely to emerge or endure.”¹⁸

In his book, *After Virtue*, Alasdair MacIntyre argues that communitarianism is the best way of addressing the problem of the rivalry between competing ethical approaches which are an indication of the failed enlightenment project of constructing moral rules based on rationality. The separation of self as individual from “inherited modes of both thought and practice” made this failure inevitable.¹⁹ The contradictions inherent in the process of individuals becoming

15 ARISTOTLE (350BC): *Nicomachen Ethics*, Book VIII. Translated by W.D.Ross. Internet Classic Archive. <http://www.classics.mit.edu/classics/nicomachaen.html>.

16 Michael J. SANDEL: *Liberalism and the Limits of Justice*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1982, 33.

17 Philip SELZNICK:(1998) *Social Justice: A Communitarian Perspective*. In: *The Essential Communitarian Reader*. Amitai ETZIONIE (ed.) Rowman and Littlefield: Oxford, 1998, 65.

18 Idem.

19 Alisdair MACINTYRE: 1984 *After Virtue* (2nd edn.) University of Notre Dame Press, Notre Dame, 61.

their own moral authority meant that morality would appear “as a mere instrument of individual desire and will”.²⁰

MacIntyre uses different historical narratives to develop a new approach to ethics focusing on the virtues in an attempt to resolve moral disagreements within modernity. Using an Aristotelian analysis, MacIntyre refers to the interrelationship of the virtues and the agreement within a community about those virtues that makes possible “the kind of bond between citizens which, on Aristotle’s view, constitutes a *polis*.” While friendship is considered to be one of these interrelated virtues, it is also the bond of friendship that unites citizens and is “essential and primary to the constitution of any form of community, whether that of household or a city”.²¹

While there are in response many criticisms of communitarianism and the misrepresentation of liberalism, the focus on virtue within politics has been picked up by some of these critics. For example, Callan argues for a “conception of political virtue grounded in the idea of free and equal citizenship” drawing heavily on John Rawls. He claims that both virtue and judicious institutional design can be reconciled.²² In addition, Callan makes the link with the ethics of care and argues that both care and justice needed to be blended “into a common voice”.²³ However, he argues against Sandel’s elevation of virtues over justice, and prefers that ‘civically relevant kinds of caring’ need to “supplement rather than supplant the moral primacy of justice.”²⁴

The Ethics of Care / Friendship connection

The initial impetus for the developments in the mid to late 20th century of an ethic of care came from the work of a developmental psychologist, Carol Gilligan. In her influential book, *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women’s Development*, Gilligan draws on the work of the psychologist Nancy Chodorow who had suggested that the female capacity for empathy was a near universal non-biological gender difference. Gilligan identifies a distinct moral voice reflecting a relational ethic of care which is different from the standard ethic of justice identified by traditional masculine theories of moral development. Gilligan gives a critique of the empirical research into models of moral development which found that the highest level of ethical decision-making was based on

20 Ibid, 62.

21 Ibid, 155.

22 Eamonn CALLAN: *Creating Citizens: Political Education and Liberal Democracy*. Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1997, 7.

23 Ibid, 71.

24 Ibid, 85.

impartial application of universal principles, associating moral maturity with detachment and independence and subordinating relationships to rules. Gilligan found that women had a heightened sense of responsibility for other people. This caring for others had been dismissed by Kohlberg as a lower level of moral development and had been devalued by Freud as being too emotional. From her findings, Gilligan constructed a model of moral development which considers appropriate caring as a moral strength and recognizes the primary interdependence of self and other.²⁵

It is Gilligan's claim about women's 'different voice', as well as her critique of traditional theories of moral development which link her into the feminist philosophical debate. There has been a wide-ranging dispute between feminists as to whether the ethics of care is 'feminine' rather than 'feminist', whether an emphasis on a woman-specific approach to morality reinforces stereotypes of women as more caring than men, and therefore more suitable to be the carers for society. This seemed to work against the feminist project, confirming women "in their 'otherness', and thus prevent[ing] them claiming access to the moral and political order on equal terms, as full-fledged, independent individuals".²⁶ Charges of 'essentialism' and 'false universalism', according to Clement have been laid against the ethic of care, and this debate intersects with the feminist debates about the importance of recognizing differences between women in terms of aspects such as race, class and culture.²⁷

Another on-going debate concerning the ethics of care is how it is related to the ethics of justice. Clement argues that this is an extremely important debate because the two approaches "are more fundamental than other possible ethics because they thematize two basic dimensions of human relationships, dimensions that might be called vertical and horizontal" – with justice focused on equality and inequality, and care focused on attachment and detachment.²⁸ She believes that the 'gender-coding' of the two approaches has to some extent concealed the great importance for morality in general of an understanding of the relationship between care and justice.²⁹ The debate ranges from the claim that these are two distinct and incompatible approaches to morality, to the assertion that there is no true morality if these two approaches are not able to be

25 Carol GILLIGAN: *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge Massachusetts, 1982.

26 See Selma SEVENHUIJSEN: *Citizenship and the Ethics of Care: Feminist Considerations on Justice, Morality and Politics*. Routledge, London, 1998, 38.

27 Grace CLEMENT: *Care, Autonomy, and Justice: Feminism and the Ethic of Care*. Westview Press, Boulder, Colorado and Oxford, 1996, 3. In fact, some feminist writers, such as Patricia Hill COLLINS, refer to care as an Afrocentric value (see CLEMENT 1996, 9, endnote 1). This will be discussed further in relation to indigeneity and postcolonialism.

28 CLEMENT, 1.

29 Ibid, 2.

reconciled. Robinson, for example, on the one hand is “skeptical of attempts to combine the universalist tendencies of the justice tradition with the situated approach advocated by proponents of the ethic of care”.³⁰ Sevenhuijsen, on the other hand, argues for a “caring justice” and suggests “starting with the vocabulary of care and reformulating the central concepts of a justice orientation in light of this.”³¹

Increasingly the debate over moral friendship and the ethics of care is being enjoined. For example, Sibyl Schwartzenbach’s 2007 piece explicitly challenges the ethics of care with her proposal for civic friendship, which she argues can not only help to realize the goals of public care, but is also able to acknowledge women’s role appropriately, and being based on reciprocity, unlike the care ethos, can establish equality.³² This aspect of the friendship debate originated in philosophy rather than psychology, but the links are the concern for human relationships, justice and morality. Sasha Roseneil brings together friendship and care from a psycho-social approach to the study of friendship and non-conventional partnership. She uses psychoanalysis to bring into focus “ignored, ambivalent, un-negotiated, conflicted, internal, inner world and the impact on close personal relations.”³³

Psychology addresses other areas of scientific inquiry to suggest solutions for individuals struggling to find answers about how to attain a good life. The psychological literature has also identified as extremely important for the psychological and physical well-being of society and the individuals within it, stable, enduring, supportive and attractive human relationships.

The Psychology / Friendship Connection

Modern psychology arose along with political individualism, and the business and disciplines of psychology and psychiatry have blossomed with the pressures and stresses brought about by Western political, business and social structures. Two recent developments in the discipline of psychology have also paved the way

30 ROBINSON 1999 cited in Julie Anne WHITE: ‘Citizenship and the Labor of Care’. In: *Polity* 33:3, Spring, 2001, 492.

31 SEVENHUIJSEN 1998, cited in WHITE, op. cit., 494.

32 Sibyl A. SCHWARZENBACH: Civic Friendship: A Critique of Recent Care Theory. In: Graham SMITH and Preston KING (eds.) *Special Issue on Friendship in Politics: Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy*. 10 (2), June, Routledge: London, 2007, 233 – 255.

33 Sasha ROSENEIL: Friendship in the age of individualization: care, culture and capacity. Paper presented at the Conference of Friendship and Care: A Comparison of Theoretical Conceptions and Empirical Findings in Europe, Hamburger Institut für Sozialforschung/Hamburg Institute for Social Research, 7 – 9 November, 2007.

for a focus on friendship. ‘Relational psychology’ has been associated with similar developments such as those of Carol Gilligan which came from “questioning authority – most important, questioning traditional answers about difference and relationship”.³⁴ Such psychological conditions as ‘dissociation’ or the ability to sever thought from feelings, which, at the extreme end of the spectrum is an indication of psychological trauma, is addressed by focusing on empathy, contentment, joy and healthy, mutual relationships.³⁵ Romantic love has been the focus of much of the relationship literature and the focus has been mainly on couples or ‘pairing’. More recently this literature has paid more attention to intercultural differences.³⁶

Another field of psychology named in 1998 is ‘positive psychology’ which instead of looking at human problems and how to remedy them, claims to be “the scientific study of what goes right in life [...] and takes seriously as a subject matter those things that make life most worth living.”³⁷ This approach tries to identify positive subjective experiences, individual traits and institutions.³⁸ While romantic love and sexuality are also part of relational and positive psychological, there have been many studies specifically on friendship in all aspects of life – for children, for adults, and gender differences.³⁹ Monika Keller from the Max Planck Institute for Human Development, for example, has looked at how children understand responsibilities in close friendship and the value of the

34 Christina ROBB: *This Changes Everything: The Relational Revolution in Psychology*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux: New York, 2006, ix.

35 See for example B.T. MCAWHIRTER: *Loneliness: A view of current literature with implications for counseling and research*. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 69, 1990, 417–422; Jean Baker MILLER and Irene Pierce STIVER: *The Healing Connection: How Women Form Relationships in Therapy and in Life*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1997; Joyce K. FLETCHER: *Disappearing Acts: Gender Power and Relational Practice at Work*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press, 1999; Terrence REAL: *How Can I Get Through to You? Reconnecting Men and Women*. New York: Scribner, 2002; Maureen WALKER and Wendy B. ROSEN (eds.): *How Connections Heal: Stories from Relational-Culture Therapy*. New York: Guildford Press, 2004.

36 Robert J. STERNBERG and Karin WEIS (eds.): *The New Psychology of Love*. Yale University Press: New Haven and London, 2006.

37 Christopher PETERSON: *A Primer in Positive Psychology*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006, 4 and B.L. FREDRICKSON: *The role of positive emotions in positive psychology: the broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions*. *American Psychologist* 56, 2001, 218–226.

38 PETERSON, 20.

39 C. HOWES: *Patterns of friendship* *Child Development*. 54, 1983, 1041–1053; K.I. WINN/D.W. CRAWFORD/J.L. FISCHER: *Equity and commitment in romance versus friendship*. *Journal of Social Behavior and Personality* 6, 1991, 301–314; L.E. ELKINS/C. PETERSON: *Gender differences in best friendships* *Sex Roles*. 29, 1993, 497–508; A.F. NEWCOMB/C. BAGWELL: *Children’s friendship relations: A meta-analytic review*. *Psychological Bulletin* 117, 1995, 306–347; W.W. HARTUP/N. STEVENS: *Friendship and adaptation in the life course*. *Psychological Bulletin* 121, 1997, 355–370.

development process in terms of universal or cultural specific aspects.⁴⁰ The psychological literature has contributed to definitions of friendship with various works related to taxonomies of love which have defined friendship love as 'storge', quiet and companionate, 'love by evolution' rather than by 'revolution', comparing it mainly to eros or romantic love and sexual desire.⁴¹

The evidence from psychology of the importance of social interaction for individual well-being, has arisen in response to the isolation and atomizing consequences of an individualist western culture. In Western culture reciprocity is associated most closely with the friendship relationship which requires this two-way connection for the existence of this non-kin relationship. The increased knowledge of more communal cultures is available to Western audiences via the intellectual approaches such as postcolonialism and indigeneity. It is part of my argument that those philosophies that have focused attention on interdependence rather than independence have assisted in paving the way for the resurrection of friendship as an appropriate topic for political debate.

Postcolonialism / Friendship Connection

According to Featherstone "few areas of study are at once so lively and so beset by doubts and dilemmas as postcolonial studies."⁴² It is an approach which intertwines with a number of the other ideologies, methodologies and frameworks that are being discussed in this section. A link which can be made with psychology and its critics, is via Frantz Fanon, one of those most closely associated with the development of postcolonialism. Fanon, a Caribbean doctor who became a revolutionary in Algeria, was both a psychiatrist and a political theorist, who claimed that colonialism was responsible for many of the neuroses experienced by the colonized.⁴³ Postcolonialism exposes the Eurocentrism of academic discourse, practices and theories. While it is notoriously difficult to define, Stuart Hall refers to postcolonialism as "a general process of decolonization which, like colonization itself, has marked the colonizing societies as powerfully as it has the colonized (of course, in different ways)."⁴⁴ McLeod

40 Monika KELLER: Responsibilities in Friendship: Development and Culture. Paper presented at the Conference of Friendship and Care: A Comparison of Theoretical Conceptions and Empirical Findings in Europe, Hamburger Institut für Sozialforschung/Hamburg Institute for Social Research, 7–9 November, 2007.

41 See STERNBERG/WEIS, op. cit.

42 Simon FEATHERSTONE: Postcolonial Cultures. University Press of Mississippi, 2005, 1.

43 Anthony ALESSANDRINI: Humanism in Question: Fanon and Said in Henry Schwarz and Sangeeta Ray (eds.) A Companion to Postcolonial Studies, Blackwell, Malden, Mass./Oxford, 2000, 435.

44 Stuart HALL: When was the 'Post-Colonial'? Thinking at the Limit. In Iain CHAMERS/Lidia

attempts to incorporate an understanding of the historical and intellectual contexts behind postcolonialism and proposes that in its literary context it is a reading of texts by writers concerned with the workings and legacy of colonialism and/or which deal with the diaspora experience. In addition it is a re-reading of texts produced during colonialism.⁴⁵ Other commentators, such as Quayson, emphasize that postcolonialism is more “concerned with pressing economic, political, and cultural inequalities.”⁴⁶

Prominent since the 1960s has been the African-American social movement and philosophy. According to Lott and Pittman the development of African-American philosophy was accompanied by the establishment of Black Studies in the universities. However, it was:

the social movements of the black people themselves – from Garveyism and the Harlem Renaissance to the Civil Rights movement and its more radical progeny – that compelled social change and forced the larger American society’s grudging acknowledgement of the deep historical racial injustices.⁴⁷

Postcolonialism is also explicitly linked to feminism. As has been noted previously, within the feminist perspective which questions the social positioning of women, is recognition of the exclusion of other groups. However, the association between postcolonialism and feminism is complex and multi-directional. Feminism has been described as “a constitutive part of the field of postcolonialism.”⁴⁸ However, some feminists have also criticized postcolonialism for being a very male-centred field of study. Postcolonial feminism has also exposed the flaws in First World feminism and McLeod argues that “some of the most groundbreaking, thought-provoking and influential work within postcolonialism has come from debates concerning representations of gender difference in postcolonial contexts.”⁴⁹

It is the linking of postcolonialism and feminism which can lead to considerations of relationships, empathy and connection as Monica Mookherjee argues in an article about the issue of prohibiting women from wearing the Muslim veil or *hijab* in French state schools. Mookherjee suggests that a model of ‘affective

CURTIS (eds.): *The Post-Colonial Question: Common Skies, Divided Horizons*, Routledge, London, 1996, 246.

45 John MCLEOD: *Beginning Postcolonialism*, Manchester University Press, Manchester and New York, 2000, 33.

46 Ato QUAYSON: *Postcolonialism and Postmodernism*. In: *A Companion to Postcolonial Studies*. Henry SCHWARZ/Sangeeta RAY (eds.) Blackwell, Malden, Mass./Oxford, 2000, 87.

47 Tommy L. LOTT/John P. PITTMAN (eds.) *A Companion to African-American Philosophy*. Blackwell: Oxford, Malden, Melbourne, Berlin, 2003, xiii.

48 John MCLEOD: *Beginning Postcolonialism*. Manchester University Press: Manchester and New York, 2000, 173.

49 *Ibid*, 172.

citizenship' is useful to overcome any "conflict between the ideals of gender equality and cultural recognition".⁵⁰ The affective citizenship model advocates reciprocity and sharing of information as a form of democratic communication by "affirming, revaluing and creating bonds".⁵¹ This approach encourages relationship-building to rectify "group-based disadvantages".⁵²

Black feminism⁵³ both links feminism and postcolonialism, and challenges these two ideological approaches. It explicitly stresses making connections while acknowledging disconnections. Patricia Hill Collins has been influential in advocating what she calls a "both/and conceptual orientation".⁵⁴ This comes from the experience of black women who view the world holistically, rather than in opposites or dichotomies, as they have had to "negotiate the contradictions of being simultaneously similar to and different from other groups (e.g., Black men, other women of color)"⁵⁵, as Hill Collins puts it "simultaneously a member of a group and yet standing outside it".⁵⁶ Black feminism entails "both multiple, interlocking identities (e.g. Black, female, and working class) and multiple, interdependent oppressions (such as racism, sexism, and classism)".⁵⁷

There are also explicit links made to the ethics of care approach, with the idea of a black feminist ethic of caring, which is considered to be integral to black feminist thought and black women's practice focusing on community and sisterhood.⁵⁸ Jones and Varner examine the work of playwright, novelist and essayist Pearl Cleage, and claim that Cleage illustrates the way in which black women take 'care' of their 'sisters' by means of the communication strategies of "sass, silence and support".⁵⁹ Jones and Varner suggest that:

50 Monica MOOKHERJEE: *Affective Citizenship: Feminism, Postcolonialism and the Politics of Recognition*. *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy*. March 8:1, 2005, 33.

51 *Ibid*, 37.

52 *Ibid*, 47.

53 Black feminism and African American feminism are often used interchangeably in the literature, although it is acknowledged that there are also debates about these terms. Feminist and womanist, likewise are interrelated, though separate terms associated with studies concerning Black and African American women.

54 Patricia HILL COLLINS: *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness and the Politics of Empowerment*. Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1990, 207.

55 Marsha HOUSTON/Olga Idriss DAVIS (eds.): *Centering Ourselves: African American Feminist and Womanist Studies of Discourse*. Hampton Press Inc: Cresskill, New Jersey, 2002, 5.

56 HILL/COLLINS, *op. cit.*, 207.

57 HOUSTON/DAVIS, *op. cit.*, 5

58 *Ibid*.

59 Joni L. JONES/Teri L. VARNER: "Take Care of Your Sisters": Communication Among the Women in the Works of Pearl Cleage. In: *Centering Ourselves: African American Feminist and Womanist Studies of Discourse*. Marsha HOUSTON/Olga Idriss DAVIS (eds.) Hampton Press Inc: Cresskill, New Jersey, 2002, 66.

African American women form solidarity with one another and establish values for survival through their communication. Talking with each other can be a place of safety where one can test one's voice, a voice often silenced in the larger community with African American men and with people of different historical backgrounds.⁶⁰

Jewell in her research described the emotion and physical care evident in the interaction between black women:

The mutual support and reinforcement that African American women maintain can be observed on a daily basis as they interact with each other. The discourse between friends and even acquaintances is generally uplifting and supportive. African American women, young and old, are complimentary in their discourse. They frequently invoke a social closeness by interacting in close physical propinquity, touching and offering positive compliments to each other about the most minute accomplishments.⁶¹

The language of care, mutual support and reciprocity is also to be located in the literature on indigeneity about the importance of relationships. While there are similarities between postcolonialism and the concept of indigeneity, Gayatri Chakrovorty Spivak, who has been described as part of the Holy Trinity of eminent postcolonial critics, argues that there are real differences.⁶²

The Indigeneity / Friendship Connection

It is argued that postcolonial theory has failed indigenous peoples and has emerged as “a subversion rather than a revolution.”⁶³ Both approaches speak for disadvantaged ethnic groups, but crucially, it has been argued, the “indigenous people of an invaded colony are the only ‘truly colonized’ group.”⁶⁴ Larissa Behrendt uses the two key concepts of ‘sovereignty’ and ‘self-determination’ in her analysis of Australian Aboriginal rights on the basis that “these have been the two political aspirations that have been most centrally featured in the lexicon of Indigenous claims.”⁶⁵

However, there are also divisions within this approach and the term indigeneity has become “one of the most contentiously debated concepts in

60 Ibid, 162.

61 JEWELL:1993, 68 (cited in JONES and VARNER, op. cit., 162).

62 Gayatri Chakrovorty SPIVAK: *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason: Toward a History of the Vanishing Present*. Harvard University Press: Cambridge, Mass./London, 1999, xvii.

63 COOK-LYNN cited in Jace WEAVER: *Indigenoussness and Indigeneity*. In: *A Companion to Postcolonial Studies*. Henry SCHWARZ/Sangeeta RAY (eds.) Blackwell: Malden, Mass./Oxford, 2000, 232.

64 Ibid, 221.

65 Larissa BEHRENDT: *Achieving Social Justice: Indigenous Rights and Australia's Future*. The Federation Press: Sydney, 2003, 87.