POLITICAL FRIENDSHIP AMONG PEOPLES

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Abstract: Does the concept of political friendship make sense, and does cultivating political friendship among peoples strengthen universal peace? This article provides an Aristotelian account of political friendship as distinct from but analogous to personal friendship. Political friendships, founded on mutual recognition and respect, are characterized by consensual agreement about the fundamental terms of cooperation. While promoting such political friendship at the global level would be a measure to strengthen universal peace, another form of friendship, politicized friendship, is to be avoided, as it is driven by rivalrous rather than equitable self-interest, and breeds political enmity and strife. Taking Aristotle's insights about political friendship to the global arena, the article considers Rawlsian peoples to be suitable subjects for political friendship. The duty of assistance and the duty to oppose outlaw states illuminate demands of political friendship among Rawlsian peoples that entail equity, power sharing and even sacrifice.

Keywords: Aristotle, peoples, political friendship, Rawls

Introduction

One day after the attacks of 11 September 2001 (9/11), members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) invoked Article V of its basic treaty for the first time since the founding of the military alliance in 1949. Although the measure did not automatically commit NATO members to support the United States' military responses to the 9/11 attacks, it expressed their solidarity with the United States – 'an attack on one is an attack on all' – and their resolve to commit to a collective defence strategy against the threat posed by Al-Qaeda. In other expressions of solidarity after the attacks, many governments and

Journal of International Political Theory, 5(1) 2009, 41–58
DOI: 10.3366/E1755088209000317

corporations took out full-page advertisements in *The New York Times*. The Canadian government's ad read, 'We share your outrage, grief, compassion, and resolve. The people of Canada are with you every step of the way. As friends. As neighbours. As family' (*The Globe and Mail* 2001). While this expression of political friendship and solidarity arose in a particular context in response to a specific event, friendship between nations and peoples constitutes one of the declared general purposes of the United Nations – to 'develop friendly relations among nations based on respect for the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples' – and is identified as a key measure 'to strengthen universal peace' (UN Charter, Article 1).

Does it make sense to think of military alliances or relationships between countries, nations or peoples as involving some notion of *political friendship*? If the case can be made for an intelligible concept of political friendship, is such friendship conducive to good global politics or the end of universal peace? Or might friendship among peoples, nations or states in world politics constitute a source of discord, enmity and conflict?

If we take friendship between individual persons as our paradigm for the concept of friendship, some might conclude that military alliances and political relationships in general, even successful and enduring ones, fall well short of genuine friendship. After all, the usually positive affective basis of personal friendships is relatively absent from political relationships; and even political and military alliances that exhibit mutual affection and concern invariably include an instrumental dimension. Some might argue then that the constitutive norms of friendship, characterized by mutually reciprocated and recognized goodwill, are directly opposed to the constitutive norms of politics, characterized at best by the pursuit of mutual instrumental or rational advantage. If this is the case, then the concept and language of 'political friendship' cannot be anything more than vacuous or intentionally deceptive rhetoric that politicians employ to disguise self-interested motives and aims. As Simon Keller (2009) argues, moral and political philosophers should not degrade the language of friendship by mixing it with the politics of states.

In this article I consider an opposing argument found in Aristotle, that good political relationships and a certain kind of friendship, *distinct from but analogous* to personal friendship, go hand in hand. According to this view, *political* friendship arises from a politics of mutual respect and recognition and aims to cultivate consensual agreement on the fundamental terms of political cooperation. Political friendships so conceived are a vital measure to strengthening civil concord and, one may argue, universal peace. At the same time that Aristotle provides a stimulating resource for thinking about political friendship among peoples, his critique of the practice of *politicized* friendship in ancient Athens reveals the way in which certain kinds of partnerships in politics may, far from contributing to concord, represent a source of political discord and conflict. In this article I seek to provide a normative account of political friendship as

a moral good among peoples with which we can evaluate and criticize some current practices of international friendship. Taking Aristotle's insights about political friendship in the *polis* to the global arena, I consider how John Rawls's law of peoples implies a role for political friendship among peoples.

The Concept of Political Friendship

From one point of view, friendship and politics make strange bedfellows. Applying the concept of friendship to political partnerships might seem misleading in terms of the different kinds of motivations and aims that ground these different types of relationships. If political relationships are motivated more by self-interest and aim at instrumental advantage, and personal friendships are motivated more by concern for the other and aim at mutual recognition, one might argue that politics and friendship just do not mix. After all, someone who is only your friend for instrumental reasons to do with their own interests or advantage would hardly count as a genuine friend. But by some accounts, governments and states form political, economic and military alliances precisely for instrumental reasons, to protect, promote or advance their own national interest. If this is right, then the concept of 'political friendship' is an oxymoron.

Aristotle, a common starting point for discussions of personal friendship, characterizes friendship as mutually recognized and 'reciprocated goodwill' (1985: 1155b30–5). He admits a variety of different types of friendship based on utility, pleasure, and virtue, but maintains that only virtue friendships are complete in that they involve wishing goods to the other 'for the other's sake' (1168b3). An important limitation on virtue friendships is that they are rare and hard to cultivate, for 'it is impossible to be many people's friend for their virtue and for themselves. We have reason to be satisfied if we can find even a few such friends' (1171a15–20). With this account, however, it seems that personal friendship is not something that can be easily translated into the political realm.

Yet we can find in Aristotle the argument that good politics and a certain kind of friendship, *distinct from but analogous* to personal friendship, go hand in hand. Before delving into the substance of that analogy, it is important to acknowledge that exploring political friendship as analogous to personal friendship does not involve an attempt to equate or identify political relationships between entities such as countries, states or peoples with personal relationships between individuals. Keller (2009) is right that the ontological differences between persons and states or countries are too profound for a direct transference of concepts such as friendship. Yet as Gordon Schochet has noted in his exploration of patriarchalism in political thought, there is a difference between an identification and an analogous comparison:

> [A]n identification requires a total transference of meaning from one entity to the institutions for which it is being used as a symbol. [An analogous] comparison or

> simile, on the other hand, leaves open the question of the ways in which the two entities or institutions are alike and different. It allows, and even invites, debate about how well and how much a particular symbolic explanation fits. (Schochet 1975: 146).

Indeed, it seems that Aristotle recognized this point in differentiating between several kinds of relationships in human life – from master-slave and spousal relationships to civic and inter-city alliances – while maintaining that friendship as a concept could be intelligibly applied to each of these distinct kinds of partnerships.[1]

Aristotle considers friendship to be a pertinent concept in politics, noting that 'friendship would seem to hold cities together, and legislators would seem to be more concerned about it than about justice. For concord [*homonoia*] would seem to be *similar to* friendship and they [legislators] aim at concord above all, while they try above all to expel civil conflict, which is enmity' (1985: 1155a24–7, emphasis mine). Political friendship is distinct from personal friendship: for example, while an individual who has many friends may just be ingratiating, 'it is possible to be a friend of many in a fellow-citizen's way, and still to be a truly decent person, not ingratiating' (1171a15–20). While distinct, political friendship is analogous to personal friendship, for political friendship and political virtue are intrinsically connected in an analogous way that personal friendship and individual virtue are connected. Civic political friendship is not the same as individual virtue friendship; at the same time, political friendship is not only self-regarding and instrumental but importantly other-regarding to the extent that it involves political virtues, including equity and a commitment to power sharing (Allen 2004: 127–30). In both good personal and good political friendships, the cultivation and practice of virtue is a central component.

Aristotle's account of friendship between individuals as well as within political communities serves to show that legislators have misunderstood the relationship between political friendship and justice. In domestic polities political friendship is intrinsically connected to political justice: 'Friendship appears in each of the political systems, to the extent that justice appears also' (Aristotle 1985: 1161a10–11). Aristotle does not mean that just polities produce more personal friendships, although that may be the case.[2] Rather, political friendship involves the practice of virtues that engender mutual respect and recognition, and aims at consensual agreement or concord between the rulers and the ruled about the fundamental terms of their cooperation. In an unjust order, such as a tyranny, 'there is little or no friendship. For where ruler and ruled have nothing in common, they have no friendship, since they have no justice either' (1161a30–3).

At the same time, however, Aristotle seems to acknowledge an instrumental basis to most political relationships. As Richard Kraut observes in his study of Aristotle's political philosophy, 'When cities form alliances or businessmen form partnerships, their motives are self-interested; they benefit others, but only

because they expect to get something for themselves from the relationship' (2002: 466). If political relationships are established mainly in accordance with advantage (Aristotle 1985: 1160a8–28, 1163b32–5) and alliances formed for the sake of mutual protection count as friendships (1157a26–8), they more closely resemble use friendships than virtue friendships (Allen 2004: 127; Frank 2005). Is there a deep contradiction between Aristotle's acknowledgement of the instrumental basis of political relationships, such as collective security alliances, and his account of political friendship? Jill Frank makes a compelling case in support of the pertinence of friendship in politics, even if political relationships are more analogous to personal use friendships than virtue friendships. This is because use friendships, to be enduring, also involve virtue. Indeed, while Aristotle notes that use friendships are more quarrelsome and prone to dissolution, he does not posit that virtue and utility are mutually exclusive. Importantly for Aristotle, virtue friendships are not to be considered more *genuine* than use or pleasure friendships, but more *complete* in that virtue friends not only practice virtue towards each other, but are 'also pleasant to each other' and 'useful to each other' (1985: 1157a2–3). Most human partnerships, personal and political, may arise out of concerns with utility and pleasure, but Aristotle posits that all different kinds of partnerships can be improved to the extent that they involve virtue (Fiasse forthcoming). This means that political partnerships can go beyond utilitarian motives, and can be enduring, despite conflicts of interest, to the extent that the relevant political agents – citizens or peoples – exercise the appropriate virtues in their relations.

Friendships based on utility may arise from self-interested concerns, but the maintenance of such friendships involves transformations of self-interest. Frank discusses military alliances, noting that although they are best modeled as use friendships, they typically require 'an enlarged sense of self-interest, trust, and even sacrifice'; the justification and acceptance of sacrifice is 'their mutual preservation, which, though based on self-interest, is not reducible to it' (2005: 155). Of course, some military alliances, such as the brief German-Soviet Non-Aggression Pact of 1939, may be purely expedient partnerships that fail to contain any hint of friendship or virtue, but others, such as NATO, could plausibly be described as alliances involving political friendship. An alliance such as NATO was founded for a common objective of mutual preservation, but NATO only endures to the extent that there is agreement among its members about the fundamental terms of their cooperation, including the objectives of the alliance, the terms of membership and expansion of membership, and the distribution of burdens and benefits in meeting the objectives of the alliance. Contemporary debates in Canada and the Netherlands about these countries' continued troop commitment to the NATO mission in Afghanistan, for example, are illustrative of how conflicts about difficult assignments may arise within military alliances, and how their successful resolution requires a sense of equity in the distribution of burdens, as well as 'compromise and negotiation, sacrifice

and trust' (Frank 2005: 155). In addition, debates about NATO expansion require members to exercise good judgment about the reasons for expansion and their consistency with the alliance's fundamental objectives. Since use friendships are quarrelsome, their durability depend on the parties' ability to mediate and resolve arising conflicts; thus, to Frank, 'That good judgment and moderation are necessary if use friends are to mediate their own conflicts suggests that use friendship [to be enduring] depends on the exercise of virtue' (2005: 156).

In a similar vein, according to Danielle Allen, enduring use friendships transform 'rivalrous self-interest,' characterized by a conception of self-interest that is indifferent to the interests of others, into 'equitable self-interest,' characterized by an incorporation of the 'good of others' into an account of one's own interests (2004: 133–4). Partnerships based on utility are likely to involve conflicts of interest, but friendly resolution of such conflicts precludes domination or acquiescence, and involves equity and power sharing. As Allen puts it, in a democratic political context, 'friends must feel that their relationship rests on equality: each must believe that the relationship's benefits and burdens are shared more or less equally; each friend needs equal recognition from the other; and each needs an equal agency within the relationship' (2004: 129). Aristotle also distinguishes between good and bad forms of self-love, noting that friendship is consistent with a proper view of self-love based on 'a correct view of the self' and its interests, whereas those who hold an improper view of self-love, characterized by greed in desiring to 'award the biggest share in money, honours and bodily pleasures to themselves' are incontinent partners for friendship (1985: 1168b15–1169a5).

Indeed, Aristotle's account of political friendship as concord between ruler and ruled on the fundamental terms of cooperation signaled a repudiation of previous models of social cohesion in fifth century Athens based on personal, kinship or social ties, or on mass loyalty generated by powerful rhetoricians. According to Frank and others, these forms of friendship in political life 'proved, rather, to be sources of faction' (2005: 148; Connor 1992). *Politicized*, as opposed to *political*, friendships involve the instrumentalization and deployment of one's particular and exclusive social ties or allegiances in the pursuit of power or advantage without regard for justice or the common good. Whereas *political* friendship is a partnership in virtue characterized by mutually recognized and reciprocated goodwill, *politicized* friendship refers to alliances characterized by *pleonexia*. Commonly translated as 'greed', Allen points out that it simply means "'wanting more than" – more than someone else, more than what one deserves, more than is consistent with concord in the city' (2004: 125–6). Politicized friendships are indicative of a politics of 'rivalrous self-interest' (126), and such friendships are the source of faction within a city, as well as estrangement and conflict between political communities at the global level (Thucydides 1954). In their critiques of a conventional view that defined justice as helping one's friends and harming one's enemies, both Plato (1968) and Aristotle (1984) sought to

discredit the practice of *politicized* friendship that was based on an improper understanding of the self and consequently distorted views of self-love. Political friendship of the kind proposed by Aristotle, which involves acting virtuously and in the common good, promises to be 'more enduring, especially in the face of conflict, than the strategic friendships between the wealthy and the many in the late fifth century proved to be' (Frank 2005: 149).

Whereas political friendship fosters civil concord and peace, politicized friendship is toxic to political community. At the global level, international political, economic and military alliances and organizations typically operate more in the vein of *politicized* friendships, reflecting and exacerbating indifference, estrangement and enmity between insiders and outsiders, the haves and the have-nots, the powerful and the weak. To the extent that states operate according to 'rivalrous' rather than 'equitable' conceptions of national interest, their political and economic partnerships are likely to be sources of global discord and alienation rather than concord. If the practices of *politicized* friendship militate against universal peace, is it possible and desirable to conceptualize *political* friendship beyond borders, at the global level? In other words, is it possible and desirable to envision global *homonoia*?

Political Friendship among Peoples

Political friendship among citizens involves 'a coming to terms, *homonoia*, about constitutional essentials' (Frank 2005: 149; Aristotle 1985: 1167a27–b2). One concern about an Aristotelian account of political friendship as '*homonoia*', or concord, has to do with how to understand the 'like-mindedness' that such friendship would involve. Does the concept of political friendship fit for a *polis* necessarily involve an element of homogeneity that would make it inapplicable in a *cosmo*political arena characterized by a high degree of social and cultural pluralism?

Aristotle establishes that friendship is not based on kinship, social ties, common identities or ideologies, since people who share these features do not necessarily exhibit like-mindedness with respect to 'what is just and advantageous,' nor do they 'seek it in common' (1167b7–9). As a modern example, consider the Sino-Soviet split that revealed radical dissensus within the communist ideological world on the course of world revolution (Lüthi 2008). An Aristotelian account of friendship, personal and political, does not require homogeneity in identity, interests, status or worldviews. As noted earlier, Aristotle recognized that our social worlds are diverse and varied, yet he envisaged friendship to be a potential feature of all sorts of human relationships, whatever natural and social differences and inequalities obtained between the parties. While a friend is 'another' self (Aristotle 1985: 1166a33), or 'another' me (1170b7), implying a certain unity between self and other, Aristotle also asks if one can be a 'friend to oneself' (1166b1) implying that 'a friend is a

separate self' (Frank 2005: 159).[3] Friendship aims for a concord that respects and accommodates difference, rather than one that eliminates difference or requires homogeneity. Interestingly, the philosopher-warrior John Gray noted from his combat experiences during the Second World War that the difference between friends and comrades in war lies in 'a heightened awareness of the self in friendship and in the suppression of self-awareness in comradeship' (1970: 90). While the fearful circumstances of war make comradeship easy, since individual soldiers in a fighting unit must identify and work together as one unit in order to survive, such circumstances militate against the formation and development of friendship, which requires the mutual recognition and expression of individuality. Friendship is therefore not only compatible with pluralism, but presupposes it.

How might we apply these Aristotelian insights about political friendship to the global realm? Aristotle recognized alliances between cities formed for the sake of mutual protection as friendships (1985: 1157a26–8), implying that an analogy can be made between political friendship involving individual citizens within a city and political friendship involving other kinds of political actors such as cities. In contemporary circumstances, we might consider whether an Aristotelian conception of political friendship can be constructively applied to states, countries or peoples and the realm of international relations. I will pursue this analysis by using John Rawls's concept of peoples (1999), rather than states or countries, partly because of Keller's concern (2009) not to fetishize the state or countries. In addition, I think such an analysis can illuminate a role for political friendship in Rawls's law of peoples that is founded on but also goes beyond the moral reciprocity that characterizes justice among peoples.

Rawlsian peoples are capable of friendship to the extent that they are capable of justice and other virtues. Indeed, Rawls's account of peoples highlights peoples as actors that can have 'moral motives' and a 'moral nature,' which involves an ability to 'offer fair terms of cooperation to other peoples' (1999: 17, 23; see also Pettit 2006: 42). Rawlsian well-ordered peoples, like Aristotelian well-ordered individuals and citizens, have a proper self-love that requires virtue (Aristotle 1985: 1166b25). Rawls asserts that well-ordered peoples will have a 'proper self-respect of themselves as a people, resting on their common awareness of their trials during their history and of their culture with its accomplishments' (1999: 34). This fundamental interest of peoples 'shows itself in a people's insisting on receiving from other peoples a proper respect and recognition of their equality. What distinguishes peoples from states – and this is crucial – is that just peoples are fully prepared to grant the very same proper respect and recognition to other peoples as equals' (35). In Rawls's account, peoples have moral and political agency; they have a fundamental interest in recognition, and they are capable of mutual recognition, the foundation of both justice and friendship among peoples. A society of well-ordered peoples would be characterized by mutual recognition, equity and power sharing. Political

friendship among peoples would involve a reconciliation of diversities that precludes domination, in a similar way that Aristotle's account of friendship between citizens involves unity in difference and a politics of non-domination (Frank 2005: 143–6). Political friendship among peoples so conceived does not entail homogeneity, political unification, or political subordination, but neither does it preclude the development of common global rules, practices and institutions to actualize agreements among peoples about the terms of their cooperation.

Rawls is clear that the 'moral nature' of peoples – that is, their capacity for justice and friendship based on mutual recognition – depends in part on the cultivation of domestic political virtues. Rawls shares with Aristotle the view that political and social institutions have a profound impact on the development of character, and on agents' conceptions of their legitimate interests and relationships with others. Domestically, well-ordered institutions shape the virtues of citizens, cultivating their senses of justice and entitlement in accordance with a political (moral) conception of right and justice or the common good. Defective norms and institutions negatively affect the development of citizens' motivations and virtues, and hence, conduct. In an inter-societal context, Rawls emphasizes the impact of social and political institutions on the development of members' motivations, virtues and conduct in their external relations: 'What makes peace among liberal democratic peoples possible is the internal nature of peoples as constitutional democracies and *the resulting change of the motives of the citizens*' (1999: 29, 27n, emphasis mine). Well-ordered peoples have a proper sense of self-love or self-respect and 'this reasonable sense of proper respect is not unrealistic, but is itself the outcome of democratic domestic institutions' (35).

These arguments mirror Aristotle's account of the central role of virtue in both good personal and political partnerships: 'decent people … are in concord with themselves and with each other, since they are practically of the same mind; for their wishes are stable, not flowing back and forth like a tidal strait. They wish for what is just and advantageous, and also seek it in common' (1985: 1167b5). That is to say that Aristotelian decent persons desire and grant mutual recognition as a part of political justice; they have a proper understanding of self-love, and therefore stable and reasonable (non-domination) accounts of their fundamental interests, and acknowledge the claims of others in working out the fundamental terms of cooperation for mutual advantage. Put in this way, it is easy to see why justice is a part of friendship, and why tyrants and imperial powers, who seek domination over others rather than mutual recognition, have no friends.

In cultivating a politics characterized by equity and power sharing, Rawls's society of well-ordered peoples is also characterized by respect for difference. It is important to note that although political friendship among peoples requires certain internal virtues, it does not require peoples to adopt the same conceptions of political justice or the common good in their internal relations. Even

though liberal and decent peoples – Rawls's two ideal types of well-ordered peoples – have different internal standards of justice and conceptions of the good, their ability to affirm the law of peoples in their mutual relations indicates their agreement on fundamentals with respect to relations between peoples, making friendship among peoples possible. That is, peoples do not need to share the same conceptions of justice or the good in their domestic constitutions to be able to develop political friendships with each other. Rawls explicitly endorses the virtues of fairness, tolerance and moderation in a domestic liberal context, stating that, 'Insofar as liberal conceptions require virtuous conduct of citizens, the necessary (political) virtues are those of political cooperation, such as a sense of fairness and tolerance and a willingness to meet others halfway' (1999: 15). The recognition of nonliberal decent peoples as 'equal participating members in good standing of the Society of Peoples' requires similar virtues on the part of liberal peoples and statespersons in their external relations. Indeed, liberal peoples ought to avoid being like the 'fundamentalists' that Rawls says would make his realistic utopia impossible, for in their quest for a homogenizing domination, they deny 'the fact of reasonable pluralism both within liberal and decent societies and in their relations with one another' (126–7).

At the global level, then, there is differentiation between peoples, but under the law of peoples, 'rivalrous self-interest' can be transformed into 'equitable self-interest' (Allen 2004); through a politics based on mutual recognition and justice, 'these peoples tend to develop mutual trust and confidence in one another. Moreover, peoples see those norms as advantageous for themselves and for those they care for, and therefore as time goes on they tend to accept that law as an ideal of conduct' (Rawls 1999: 44). Such a concord between peoples would produce universal peace, with significant implications for individual persons, since under a Rawslian conception of well-ordered peoples, human rights would also 'be secured everywhere' (93).

Even if relations among well-ordered liberal and decent peoples are conceivably marked by political friendship, however, how are such peoples to relate to societies that are not well-ordered, manifested in the form of outlaw states, benevolent absolutisms, or burdened societies? Using the terminology of international relations, P. E. Digeser has argued that while friendships among minimally just states provide a basis for special reasons for action and possibly even special obligations amongst them, 'international friendship does not even require that those states falling outside the circle of friends be considered enemies. Alliances of economic gain and military security with unjust regimes are not precluded by the idea that minimally just regimes have good reasons to support one another' (forthcoming). Digeser argues that a parallel can be made at the individual level: 'We are not obliged to be friends with everyone or to make them into the kinds of being with whom we could be friends' (forthcoming). These arguments agree and disagree with Rawls in significant ways. Rawls agrees that no people should be treated as an enemy, if this means

casting a people outside of the universe of moral obligation altogether. In his account of just conduct in war, for example, Rawls is careful to say that the civilian population who make up most of the members of a people should not be considered responsible for the war, and the legitimate targets of military attack (1999: 95). According to Rawls, even in war, 'It is always the duty of statesmanship to take this longer view' (96). As Philip Pettit points out, 'Rawls tends to use the word 'people' only of well-ordered societies' (2006: 43).

Contra Digeser, however, Rawls argues that well-ordered peoples do not only have good reasons to support one another; the 'long-run aim' of a society of well-ordered peoples 'is to bring all societies eventually to honor the Law of Peoples and to become full members in good standing of the society of well-ordered peoples' (1999: 93). While for Digeser, military or economic alliances between minimally just regimes and fundamentally unjust regimes are not precluded by the norms of 'international friendship', Rawls argues that well-ordered peoples ought to exert pressure on outlaw regimes, which 'may need to be backed up by the firm denial of economic and other assistance, or the refusal to admit outlaw regimes as members in good standing in mutually beneficial cooperative practices' (93). Rawls seems to assume that internally just or decent peoples would also develop an appropriate sense of justice in their external relations, which is guided by the fundamental aim of bringing all peoples into good standing in a society of well-ordered peoples. By implication, Rawls is asserting that those who already enjoy the conditions of political friendship still have an obligation to help other peoples develop the internal and external conditions that would lead to the universalization of political friendship among peoples.

Pettit asks, 'if those in the second original position represent only well-ordered societies, and not individuals across all societies, then it is unclear why they would have a rational motive for endorsing such altruism' (2006: 54). Rawls is aware of the problem of the lack of friendship between such peoples. He asks, for example, whether the duty of assistance to burdened societies presupposes a degree of affinity – 'a sense of social cohesion and closeness' (1999: 112) – among peoples that is difficult to obtain, given the greater evidence of pluralism that exists within a society of peoples than within any one society. It becomes apparent in Rawls's response, however, that pluralism of languages, religions and cultures is not the reason for the lack of affinity; instead he locates the causes in 'past domestic institutional injustices' and inherited social antagonisms (112). The lack of affinity between well-ordered peoples and burdened societies is thus a product of nonideal and contingent circumstances. Rawls argues that statespersons must combat 'shortsighted tendencies' based on this lack of affinity; he notes that relations of affinity are not fixed, and that political friendship can develop between peoples 'over time as peoples come to work together in cooperative institutions they have developed' (1999: 112–3). Rawls does not assume altruism, recognizing that political cooperation between peoples may be initiated by fearful self-interest rather than altruism

(113). The political partnerships that arise will resemble use friendships, and will be conflict-prone to the extent that the parties involved engage in rivalrous self-interest, but through cooperation based on mutual respect and recognition, peoples 'may come to care about each other . . . Hence, they are no longer moved simply by self-interest but by mutual concern for each other's way of life and culture, and they become willing to make sacrifices for each other' (113).

In Rawls's global vision, a society of well-ordered peoples founded on mutual respect and recognition would in time cultivate the development of political friendship, so that the 'relatively narrow circle of *mutually caring* peoples in the world today may expand over time' (113, emphasis mine). To motivate well-ordered peoples to bear the potential sacrifices involved in implementing the duty of assistance to burdened societies and the duty to resist outlaw states, Rawls calls on statespersons to take the long view and holds out a global vision that highlights the moral potential of all peoples, not only to engage in the kind of moral reciprocity that defines justice, but also to engage in political friendship, characterized by mutual care and even sacrifice.

Political Friendship, Special Duties, and the Cosmopolitan Ideal

Does political friendship among peoples challenge the cosmopolitan ideal? This issue is raised by Digeser, who argues that reasons for action based on friendship between states, arising from their shared commitment to minimally just institutions, expand 'state concern beyond their own borders, but not so far as to include all states or all of humanity' (forthcoming). Digeser maintains that nothing in her account of 'international friendship' guarantees or rules out the development of international friendship to encompass all states, however, 'short of a world composed of minimally just states, international friendship implies a kind of partial solidarity' (forthcoming). This 'partial solidarity', however, might amount to an unacceptable kind of bias or 'mutual favouritism' that militates against the demands of impartial morality, according to Keller (2009).

The controversy about the status of special duties emanating from special relationships, and their relationship to general moral duties, is not new. I am persuaded by Samuel Scheffler's treatment of these issues. His 'moderate cosmopolitanism' holds that we may recognize 'underived special responsibilities' (constitutive of special relationships) and respect the equal worth of persons (constitutive of liberal accounts of impartial morality) (2001: 119). Although 'there is a tension between equality and special responsibilities', the limits of balancing between them need not be fixed (123). Furthermore, whether or not in a particular situation a special relationship provides reasons for differential treatment 'depend not only on the nature of the relationships involved but also on the content of the background norms and institutions that fix the social context within which the relationships arise' (123).

Whereas Digeser's account of 'international friendship' may give rise to special reasons and duties among states, *political* friendship, as I have developed here, is precisely about the 'background norms and institutions that fix the social context': the claims of political friendship among peoples serve to shape and constrain how subsets of peoples may pursue manifestations of their 'partial solidarity'. For example, it might be mutually beneficial for two peoples to pursue greater trade relations with each other. Their cooperation might have the potential of increasing greatly each other's wealth. Let us assume that both peoples are governed by domestically just or decent institutions. Can they claim that their special relationship justifies their devotion to projects of mutual advantage, at the expense of their commitment to projects of assistance to burdened societies? Or put another way, how should claims of particular friendships of this kind be reconciled with the claims of burdened societies? Digeser is right that this conflict need not be characterized as one between impartial morality and narrow self-interest. At the same time, however, it would seem that claims of special duties arising from special relationships, especially in the distribution of goods, are difficult to sustain ethically if pursued in a wider context of pervasive injustice or deprivation. Since the practice of virtue is central to an Aristotelian conception of personal and political friendship, duties of friendship should be consistent with the requirements of virtue, and thus cannot give rise to unjust acts. For example, in discussing whether one should return a favour to a benefactor rather than do something beneficial for a companion, if one cannot do both, Aristotle argues that 'usually we should return favours rather than do favours for our companions, just as we should return a loan to a creditor rather than lend to a companion' (1985: 1164b30–3).

The intimate connection between justice and friendship is also apparent in Rawls's account of the duty of assistance to burdened societies; well-ordered peoples are not justified in maintaining a gated community of peoples that is indifferent to the plight of outsiders, but must aim to establish a universal society in which *all* peoples can enjoy political justice and friendship founded on mutual recognition and concord on the fundamental terms of cooperation between peoples. The duty of helping all peoples to achieve just or decent domestic political institutions, a condition of political friendship among peoples, is one owed to all peoples who can use such help. Here, a distinction between states or governments and peoples is important, since helping a people to achieve just or decent domestic conditions may require opposing an outlaw state. Aristotle argues that when a friend's character changes and becomes vicious, as long as they have not become 'an incurably vicious person', 'we should try harder to rescue his character than his property' (1985: 1165b20). Rawls's duty of assistance and duty to oppose outlaw states are examples of such concern to assist peoples in developing or regaining their moral and political agency, which addresses but goes beyond issues of 'humanitarian concern' (Keller 2009).

For Aristotle, regimes that lack justice and hence, the conditions for *political* friendship among citizens, are characterized by faction, in which exclusionary and rivalrous *politicized* friendships are a constant source of political strife. Similarly, one might argue that if the global realm is characterized by a lack of mutual recognition and dissensus about the fundamental terms of cooperation, such a world will fail to cultivate *political* friendship among peoples; rather, it will give rise to a clubby world of *politicized* friendships that will not ameliorate but instead exacerbate the sources of estrangement, enmity and war. Absent global justice, international friendships resemble more politicized friendships; thus, 'when the members of rich and powerful societies give each other's interests priority over the interests of people in poor societies, the inevitable result is that material inequality is increased: the rich get richer and the poor get poorer' (Scheffler 2001: 120). To the extent that Digeser's account of 'international friendship' between minimally just states makes a special duties argument that might conflict with the demands of global justice, it is vulnerable to the distributive objection outlined by Scheffler, and may be considered ethically incomplete without an account of political friendship of the kind I have developed in this article.

Might my account nevertheless militate against a certain cosmopolitan ideal that is concerned with the possibility of cultivating friendships between persons globally? Political friendship among peoples does not necessarily produce more friendships between individuals across borders, but it may be the case that political friendship among peoples provides a key enabling condition for the development of personal and social friendships beyond borders or a truly global civil society. In conditions of enmity and hostility between groups, inter-group personal relationships are star-crossed; thus, where the relationship between peoples is characterized by political enmity rather than concord, individual foreigners can become stand-in targets of attack, making friendships between persons from rival peoples harder to develop and sustain. This means that proponents of an individualist cosmopolitan ideal should see some instrumental value in promoting the global conditions conducive for fostering political friendship among peoples.

Conclusion

Whereas *politicized* friendships driven by 'rivalrous self-interest' breed political discord, conflict and enmity, *political* friendships, founded on mutual recognition and respect, are conducive to political activity and relationships characterized by *homonoia* or concord about the essentials of cooperative living. Political friendship does not require or aim for the elimination of differences between peoples, or the enforcement of ideological or political conformity by a hegemonic power; rather, political friendship presupposes and respects pluralism among peoples. While conflicts, especially over the distribution of goods and

burdens, will inevitably arise, under conditions of political friendship among peoples, they will be negotiated within a global background context of norms and institutions based on mutual recognition, equity in the distribution of burdens and benefits of global cooperation, and power sharing in the institutions of global governance rather than domination by any group.

The fruits of political friendship among peoples, including international peace and security as well as universal respect for human rights, depend on the practice of virtue by the political representatives of peoples, and it is for this reason, perhaps, that political friendship is most vital. Aristotle quotes Theognis in saying that 'good people's life together allows the cultivation of virtue' (1985: 1170a12). Using insights from other work by Keller, we can see how political friendship might encourage virtue or moral improvement in world politics. Keller observes that a 'good friendship can require that you make a special effort – effort that you need not make with regard to just anyone – to see value in your friends' projects before you decide (and say) that you think them misguided' (2007: 31). While Keller may be right to worry about a potential for epistemic bias, I am inclined to think that an attitude that predisposes us to listen to and interpret information about other societies more carefully and sympathetically is not a bad thing in the complicated realm of world politics (as well as interpersonal relations), in which evidence is rarely self-explanatory, complete or transparent, thus requiring great analytical and interpretive skills. In international relations, attitudes of enmity are more likely to lead to destructive epistemic bias. Cold War rivalries during the US-Vietnam war, for example, prevented US policymakers from assessing accurately the objectives of the North Vietnamese, and a history of suffering imperialism prevented the North Vietnamese from understanding accurately the objectives of US policies in the region (McNamara 1999). The cultivation of political friendship among peoples would mean that in times of conflict, which will invariably arise in the plural world that we inhabit, there would be a basis for more sympathetic and fair hearings, not only between partial friends, but between interest-based rivals, and even among ideological competitors.

In a context of political friendship, peoples may also find external support for engaging in painful self-examinations and reflections of their past, present and future collective political selves. Our best friends are those with whom we can share, not only what is pleasant, but also what is most painful, including our vulnerabilities. This is because we trust our friends to give us a sympathetic hearing, at the same time that we rely on them to provide advice and support based on a concern for our best interests. Friendship produces and is sustained by mutual trust, which 'consists primarily of believing that others will not exploit one's vulnerabilities' (Allen 2004: 132). Good friends are thus well-positioned to offer critical but wise judgments and advice that we might reject if given by a stranger or enemy. For example, given the enduring political friendship between Canada and the United States, with which this article began, American officials

and citizens may be more likely to hear Canadian criticisms of contemporary US foreign policy in a different way than they would receive the same substantive criticisms if they were made by spokespersons for Al-Qaeda or other groups considered to have hostile intentions towards the United States.

One of the most disturbing and self-destructive characteristics of the George W. Bush administration, then, was its inability to receive critical advice from political friends, that might have helped the American people and its political representatives to come to a better understanding of how best to interpret, protect and promote the US's fundamental interests in the world. Political friendship as a virtue-promoting activity is a valuable resource for peoples to develop healthy forms of self-love or self-respect, which involve cultivating habits of recognizing the claims of others, self-restraint and avoidance of *pleonexia*, or wanting more than one deserves. Indeed, a sympathetic hearing enabled by friendship is consistent with critical and negative judgment of our friend's ideals, values, beliefs or conduct. Political friendship thus does not entail automatic support for the policies of one's friend, whatever they may be. For example, Georgia may be a democracy, and Russia may have behaved opportunistically in its military response in August 2008, but the duty of political friendship among democracies does not require suspending criticism of the rash and unconstructive policies of Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili that militated against a peaceful resolution of conflicting political claims in the region. Political friendship, rightly conceived, encourages political partners to aim at acting justly and in the common good, rather than interrogate who is with us or against us. The demands of political friendship are thus difficult to fulfill, because the practice of virtue is difficult; as Aristotle noted, 'many are able to exercise virtue in their own concerns but unable in what relates to another' (1129b33–5). Given the instability of human things, and with a healthy dose of humility about the uncertainties of moral and political judgment in the complex circumstances that characterize world politics, no people, no matter how powerful in worldly goods, can afford to be without the greatest of all external goods, political friendship.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank P. E. Digeser for launching this conversation on friendship and world politics, and Simon Keller for joining it. Previous versions of this paper were presented at the International Studies Association meetings in San Francisco (March 2008), the Ethics Research Institute at the University of Zürich, Switzerland (April 2008), the inaugural conference of this journal at the University of St Andrews, Scotland (June 2008), and a political theory seminar in the Department of Political Science at the University of British Columbia (October 2008). I am grateful to the organizers and participants of these workshops and conferences, especially Lynn Dobson, Peter Schaber,

Susanne Boshammer, the *Journal* editors, Mark Warren and Barbara Arneil for their comments. In addition, this article benefited from the advice of Christina Tarnopolsky, Gaëlle Fiasse, David Welch, and two anonymous reviewers.

Notes

[1] Aristotle is notorious for his account of a natural slave as 'a tool with a soul'. Although masters and slaves have nothing in common, precluding the possibility of friendship between them *as* masters and *as* slaves, Aristotle argues that there is friendship with a slave in so far as he 'is a human being. For every human being seems to have some relations of justice with everyone who is capable of community in law and agreement. Hence there is also friendship, to the extent that a slave is a human being' (1985: 1161b4–10).

[2] It may also be the case that a central feature of unjust regimes is the way in which they undermine the integrity of personal relationships. For a vivid enactment of how an unjust political order destroys personal relationships, see Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck's film, *The Lives of Others* (2006).

[3] For a fully elaborated argument that Aristotelian virtue friendship privileges 'distinction, difference and individuation', see Frank (2005: 156–9).

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