Political Friendship, Democracy and Modernity

Nicolas Hayoz
Associate Professor of Political Science,
Director of the Interdisciplinary Institute of Central and Eastern Europe,
University of Fribourg (Switzerland)
Address: Bd de Pérolles 90, 1700 Fribourg, Switzerland
E-mail: nicolas.hayoz@unifr.ch

In modern society, friendship seems to be relegated to the private realm. When friendship enters the public space, it is usually associated with corruption. This is particularly the case when speaking about friends in politics, where friendship is part of informal politics which is focused on accessing or keeping political power. This relational aspect of political friendship must be distinguished from a more structural and institutional aspect of political friendship, which political philosophy presents in terms of civic friendship. This is the very meaning of the political, where a public space exists with the conditions that must be guaranteed for conflictual political communication or collective political action. In this sense, the idea and the theory of civic friendship points to the relational and organizational aspects of collective action, as well as to those shared norms that are expressed and negotiated in the public sphere. No serious sociological theory can ignore the fact that, nowadays, democracies in many regions of the world are put into question because it is no longer clear where the boundaries of trust, and therefore of citizenship are, or what holds people together, particularly in the context of globalization and immigration. In relation with the theories of trust, civic friendship is civil society, the civic and political culture about the practices and expectations in society about how to live, how to work together, how to communicate politically in order to influence politics, or how to change things. Finally, the political theory of friendship is also a warning against the abuse of power and the reintroduction of unity and enemies in a society based on the differences and multiplicity of perspectives.

Keywords: friendship, enemies, trust, politics, modern society, Niklas Luhmann, Hannah Arendt, citizenship

I

Looking at the structures of modern society, it would be difficult to find a "social place," or a social function for friendship, personal ties, or networks. A common-sense-oriented observation would have already come to this conclusion. Friendship is no longer a condition for the good life in the polis as it was in ancient times or in traditional societies. However, friendship does not have only this social function, as Niklas Luhmann (1981: 224) underlined it. It was also a relationship between people with its own rules. In this sense, friendship was made possible by the political society, whereas in the former sense, it formed the basis of the political society. With the radical transformation of the old traditional society into a functionally differentiated society, the "old" conception of "politi-

cal friendship" or political society based on friendship was no longer convincing. Modern society can no longer be represented by a central idea, a basic value, or a function such as the political. Where is friendship in all of this? In this sociological perspective, it definitely became a private matter, a relationship based on sympathy or other values, but first of all, a private social relationship, in any case.[1]

Interestingly, the ongoing discussion about the return of friendship not only reveals a renewed interest in friendship as a social relationship based on specific values (Devere 2011; Schobin et al., 2016; Münch, Reidenbach, 2015; König, 2013; Nixon, 2015). In the perspective of political theory, it reveals that friendship is more than a private matter; it is also political. In the literature on friendship, one can find many references to classic authors pointing to the multiple political meanings of political friendship, best understood as collective representations and practices of social relatedness and common values. This paper observes and interprets these ideas of political friendship in the perspective of modern society. By describing the underlying ideas of political, and particularly civic, friendship as a political theory, the paper will try to reconstruct the link between friendship, trust, and the political. Moreover, it does not neglect the relational approach to political friendship, that is, friendship as part of informal politics, which democracies "share" with non-democracies. If political friendship is a defining feature of the political, then non-democracies must try to build their imagined community differently, for example, as unity, as "us against them." This would be exactly the contrary of what authors like Hannah Arendt have imagined as political friendship, as a plurality, or as a public space of dialogue (Nixon, 2015: 28, 188, 194; Gebhardt, 2008: 336). Non-democracies share at least one common feature with so-called populists: they both need enemies and their exclusive conception of friendship which implies enemies, which is a kind of Schmidtian dialectics of friendship and enemies. Therefore, since non-democracies are necessarily personalized regimes with dominant informal structures, they maintain and produce many friends, particularly around leading positions. On the other hand, having abolished the political, they have also neutralized the public space, the space where the "interconnectivity" of citizens can be symbolized and expressed. It is rather typical and a kind of irony that authoritarian regimes such as in Russia where personal networks and, with them, friendship were and are so important in society *and* in politics, have abolished the public space, the space of friendly dialogue. Here, one could support Hannah Arendt's conclusion that if friendship is a condition for democracy, then "all other forms of political regimes deny friendship or shape it to their own ends and purposes. . . . And autocracies distort friendship through their demand for unconditional loyalty to the autocrat" (Nixon, 2015: 194). Such a political perspective can be integrated in a political sociology presenting political friendship not only on a relational level, but also on a more structural and institutional one, where the conditions for conflictual political communication or collective political action have to be guaranteed.

---

1. For a discussion and presentation of Luhmann's theory of the evolution of the semantics of friendship see Schobin et al., 2016: 48ff.; Krass, 2016: ch. I.1; Kersten, 2008: 18ff.

At first glance, such a perspective does not seem to fit well with the historical change of the relationship between friendship and the political society in modern society. Politics is now the field of a specific function system focusing on political communication and decisions. Politics, at least in a democratized context, is about strategies to access power and to influence political decisions by building up winning coalitions and negotiating acceptable solutions. If friendship as a personal relationship belongs to the private realm and politics to the public sphere, then the former does not seem to be compatible with politics (Schobin et al., 2016: 157ff.). Indeed, is politics not the "battlefield" of enemies and antagonists rather than the field of friendship? Heather Devere indicates this by underlining that "Friendship in politics is associated with nepotism and favoritism, allowing unjust and unequal access to decision makers and resources" (2011: 17). Additionally, Jürgen Gebhardt (2008: 315) summarizes a more positive variant of political friendship for established democracies: "At best the power game of politics might allow for friendships of utility. Political friends do not love each other in themselves, but only insofar as some benefit accrues to them from each other as Aristotle had already observed." Such a utilitarian form of political friendship representing "politically motivated and politically used relationships of exchange" can be analyzed, for example, in the case of parliaments (Leuschner, 2011a: 212; 2011b). It can also be studied on the level of political friendship between political leaders (Gurr, 2008). Similar conceptions of friendship can, of course, be found in authoritarian regimes where key political leaders also control power through networks of friends, placing them in positions where they can and should be useful ("Putin's friends," for example). Moreover, analyses of networks of cooperation in the civil society sector can also be presented on this relational level of friendship (König, 2013: 899ff.; Devere, 2011: 19).

If this meaning of political friendship as an utility-oriented relationship focuses on politics, the second one relates political friendship to the political order as such, to the political as the core of political order. For example, this is what Jürgen Gebhardt has in mind when he states that " Western discourse on trust and friendship is a theoretical and practical discourse on the human condition of political order and as such it is an inherent element of Western self-understanding from its origins in the Greco-Roman world onward" (Gebhardt, 2008: 342). In this extended conception of political or civic friendship, political philosophy points to the goodwill between citizens, which makes it possible to live together (Hartmann, 2011: 436). If citizens share certain values, they should also be able to go beyond personal friendships based on trust, and express a more general trust towards strangers and authorities.

This paper will precisely elucidate the relationship between trust and political friendship. Moreover, it supports the idea that a modern conception of a political, public-space-oriented notion of civil friendship needs to be linked to the question of trust. It aims at describing the elements of a political theory of civic friendship from the perspective of a sociological theory of modern society. The notion of civic friendship, which can also be presented as an "extended notion of friendship" (Hartmann, 2011: 463), can be found in the ideas on political friendship of classical authors such as Aristotle, Locke, Durkheim, Toc-

queville, or Arendt. Their focus is on republican virtue, of civil society, solidarity, or pluralism. These notions form elements of a political theory of a politics of friendship (Derrida, 1999), or of politics as friendship, as Jon Nixon presents it in his study on Hannah Arendt's conception of friendship (Nixon, 2015). They also point to the multiple political meanings of political friendship best understood as collective representations and practices of social relatedness and common values. We will come back to these perspectives after an analysis of friendship in a relational perspective.

II

Despite the fact that friendship is praised everywhere, and that almost everybody has friends, speaks about them, or "likes" them as we see it on social media where the semantics of friendship is used in an inflationary manner, friendship does not seem to be socially useful more than as a private matter. Most people would confirm that it is good to have friends, but would they also say that friends should be useful, particularly when things are going bad? In an individualized society, people seem to rather rely on themselves when it comes to advance objectives and careers in life (König, 2012: 896). On the other hand, popular proverbs such as "to have a friend in high places," "that's what friends are for," or "better a hundred friends than hundred rubles" point to the utilitarian aspect of friendship. Friends should also be able to help in order to "getting things done." These seem to be current expectations which can be observed in many parts of the world, particularly in so-called peripheral regions of modern society, or so-called societies in transformation (Luhmann, 1995).

In the systemic perspective of a more complex sociological perspective, friendship as a personal relationship based on sympathy and trust is no longer a structuring principle for social relations as in traditional aristocratic societies. Modern society is, without any doubt, a depersonalized society. It is no longer an inclusive community with predominantly personal contacts. It is no longer vital to have friends and relatives in order to survive, although they may still be important in certain regions of the world. According to Niklas Luhmann, modern society has radicalized the difference between personal and impersonal relationships, and "without this difference it would not be possible to glean from the other's behavior information relevant to his intimate sphere" (1986: 162). Luhmann speaks of love as opposed to friendship here, of course, which has "won the race and ultimately determined the code for intimacy" (1986: 81f., 116f.). Friendship could not follow love in the direction of intimate relationships connected with sexuality. It could not be institutionalized as it is in the case of marriage based on love. Friendship was probably a too general and a too diffuse concept to allow such an institutionalization. Friendship in such a society definitely belongs to the private realm. However, in the private sphere, having friends does not mean that one has to share privacy or intimacy with them, even if they are so-called close friends (Hahn, 2012: 70). Additionally, as Alois Hahn (2012: 69) has observed, friendship no longer corresponds to the romantic vision of an exclusive totality shared between two individuals. The simple fact of individual dif-

ferences would make that impossible. Individuals take so many roles in modern society that it would be exceptional to "find" friends with whom one could share more than a couple of aspects of his or her own personality. The togetherness of friends may still exist and be an ideal. However, sympathy and particularity cannot be used any longer as basic values of friendship, at least not without difficulties when used as a resource to get access to privileges, and possibly considered as corruption or nepotism in western democracies.

The limits and opportunities of friendship today are influenced and, to a certain extent, even determined by the structures of modern society, its principle of functional differentiation. Helmut König points in this direction by observing that the history of liberal society starts by rendering friendship superfluous (König, 2013: 897). He quotes Adam Smith and Thomas Hobbes, both who have already observed how friendship became obsolete in a monetary and market-based economy or in a power-based political system. Sympathy and friendship can no longer be the "currency" in function systems following their own logic and codes in order to successfully solve their specific problems. Money and power are much more efficient devices than friendship. The logic of exchange and the logic of power are simplifying communication and increasing the performance of the function systems. In this sense, power is the means of communication in politics in order to make decisions, to agree, or to overcome resistance.[2]

Another aspect concerns role-taking. Luhmann writes that assuming public roles in the political system introduces a social distance by interrupting the normal links of everyday life: one cannot interfere in power by referring to family links, friendship, or other particular obligations (Luhmann, 2010: 430f.) This is the reality of function systems.

However, friendship is not disappearing. Instead of being a totality or a resource to be mobilized in almost every sphere of life as in traditional aristocratic societies, it becomes "sectoral." Looking at friendship in the perspective of function systems of modern society such as politics, the economy, science or education confirms the picture of "functional friendships." You may have friends in politics (party friends), in business (business partners), in research (project partners), and so on. Such friendships get their meaning precisely because they follow the logic of function systems. No one would expect that such friendships should be extended to the private sphere, even though that this may be the case. In politics, it is useful to build up friendships in order to gain access to power positions, to advance political projects, or to get support for these projects (Leuschner, 2011a, 2011b; Gurr, 2008, 2011). Political friendship is part of informal politics, opening the door to professional politics. It follows that personal networks in politics can also be described as political friendships (Leuschner, 2011a: 205). The importance or "value" of informal networks and the corresponding practices of political friendship may vary from one political system to the other. Here, one may ask to what extent are they functional with regard to formal structures, or to what extent they confirm or not confirm the objectives of formal rules (Pannes, 2011: 40; Helmke, Levitsky, 2004). On the other hand, when focusing more on

---

2. In the systemic perspective of Luhmann, one would speak here of "symbolically generalized communication media" such as power or money functioning as catalysts of communication and for the differentiation of the functional systems of society (Luhmann, 2012: 214).

countries in "transition" or so-called hybrid regimes, scholars are more interested in the fate of democracy and the question of whether informal personalized structures are strengthening or undermining democracy. Moreover, in certain cases, personal networks can be so dominant that they characterize the whole "regional society" with huge implications for social change or economic development.

<div align="center">III</div>

As authoritarian regimes reveal daily, political friends can also mean that political and economic organizations can be used to control power through personalized networks together with political friendships. This observation brings us not only to informal politics, but to specific dysfunctional forms of informal institutions such as patronage, clientelism, neopatrimonialism, all of which undermine democracy and, more generally, the logic of functional differentiation. Certain countries such as Russia may function like a large bureaucratic corporation, combining highly personalized leadership structures with organizational power and networks of power (friends, loyalties, and clients) which are instrumental in keeping incumbents in power. Corruption, clientelism, or personalism are just "byproducts" of a much larger structure of politico-economic power aiming to "reach out" to society by trying to control the economy, the judiciary-legal system, the media, and even the education system. Such power structures based on organization and networks exploit the functional differences of modern society in the sense that they instrumentalize them through their personalized networks. Having friends in the right positions is helpful and even indispensable if you want "to get things done" the right way, be it in the judiciary system, in banks and companies, in parliaments, or in NGOs. Old-new distinctions such as friends and enemies or the loyal and the disloyal are concealing. This means that the established differences of the functional systems, for example the legal/illegal distinction, can be handled in an opportunistic manner in the absence of a rule-of-state based state. Obviously, such a system cannot survive without corruption. It is also evident that corruption inevitably means de-differentiation only for those who are not part of the corresponding networks. For those participating in the networks, the question is about having friends in order to get access to or to keep control of assets. Informal networks and the corresponding friends are particularly important in peripheral countries of modern society in order to get things done, to accelerate processes, to get answers to requests, or to receive a "fast track" entry for specific treatments in hospitals or schools, etc. The corresponding contacts or "friends" that help or provide good will and informal services are to be found in positions in organizations, for example, hospitals or state administrations, but no longer in families (Luhmann, 1995: 22, 24). Such informal networks of friends are exploiting organizations and, with them, functional differentiation: the informal "system" of favors, services, generosity, and responsiveness is as important as or more important than what the organization allows with its formal hierarchy. The networks are using the function systems as media for their own objectives (Leanza, 2014: 168).

To this point, it can be seen that impersonal rule or depersonalized societies may well be a core feature of modern society. However, on a regional level, when looking at country-specific peculiarities, for example, we may observe highly personalized societies. It is possible to put it differently: if countries realize specific mixes of distance and proximity, and of personalized and depersonalized relationships, certain of these countries are coming closer to the personalized pole, whereas others are rather on the depersonalized side. Consequently, when living on the side of personalized relations, one would also favor a world view based on two related distinctions: those of exclusion and inclusion, and friends and enemies. In this perspective, the world is populated by people who are a part of your networks of contacts and friendship, and those who are not. On the other hand, it is also a world of people who are either with you or against you.

At this level, we may also say that we are living in societies (so-called "cold" societies), at least in the West, where indifference, the principle of arm's-length relations, universalism, or the difference between private and public are the very conditions for successful cooperation. In his analysis of corruption, Vito Tanzi describes the concept of arm's-length relationships as a principle requiring "that personal relationships should play no part in economic decisions involving more than one party" (Tanzi, 2000: 88ff.). It corresponds to the values of Max Weber's bureaucrats who would follow universalistic principles and rational procedures and in no way accept personalism, cronyism, and the confusion of the public with private interests (ibid.: 89). The arm's-length principle can be considered as one of the devices in modern society that protects the autonomy of different social spheres against "alien" interference, be it politics with its specific interests, economic interests, or interests related to clientelism, familialism, or other forms of favoritism. These devices are part of the organized checks and balances in place in society to control and regulate power and interest-motivated interferences from one social sphere to others.

Obviously, there are groups of countries coming closer to the Weberian ideal of "cold" and depersonalized societies, with public administrations being based on universalism and the arm's-length principle. On the other hand, most countries from the former Soviet Union, for example, are much closer to the opposite pole, on the side of regimes with weak institutions, strong personalism, old-boy networks, clientelism, and so on. High rates of corruption are an inevitable by-product of such informal and personalized network structures. The yearly-updated maps of Transparency International shows the distribution of corruption in different regions of the world, confirming such a differentiation of countries leaning either to the depersonalized or the personalized pole.[3] Moreover, in many world regions, the arm's-length principle conflicts with social norms that family and friends come first. Here, State officials are expected to distinguish their clients according to the degree of family relationship or friendship. Corruption is the necessary outcome of such a personalized logic. In this regard, Tanzi concludes "that the very fea-

---

3. In this regard, see the map presented by Transparency International with bribery rates across Europe and Eurasia (www.transparency.org/news/feature/governments_are_doing_a_poor_job_at_fighting_corruption_across_europe).

tures that make a country a less cold and indifferent place are also those that increase the difficulty of enforcing arm's-length rules so essential for modern, efficient markets and governments" (ibid.: 92).

This would suggest that "cold" societies based on a "Protestant ethic" with a particular political culture and specific effective institutions have a better chance of fighting corruption and establishing good governance rules than the "warm" personalized societies from the south. To this list, we may add those countries from East-Central and Eastern Europe where good governance practices, including the implementation of effective anti-corruption rules and the establishment of a clear-cut border between the public and the private sectors, are either still not the first priority of state action or are being diluted by forms of cooperation such as personal ties and sympathies combined with clientelism. However, informal politics and personalized relationships are not features that should be played off against governance principles. The question is rather to what extent personalized relationships in politics or in the economy pervert universal principles, or whether these apparently contrary principles positively reinforce each other. The answer to this question also clearly depends on whether we are speaking of rule-of-law-based democracies or autocratic regimes where personalism is part of the power structure and governance.

IV

In leaving this ambiguous field of personalized politics and "political friends," we can return to the political conception of friendship, which should not be mixed up with the observations on "having friends" or "relying on friends" in order to keep power or to getting things done. The political aspect of friendship in a civic sense must be put on a completely different level from the level of political friends. Its public-space-focused meaning can be revealed when asking why people are cooperating. They cooperate not only for profits, but also because they are sharing values and specific ideas, because they want to change things, or solve problems in different fields. They may protest for more democracy or simply realize common projects such as more democracy, associative life, fight for the protection of the environment, a more citizen-friendly city, and so on (König, 2013: 899). In doing so, they have to trust each other. They can produce and reproduce social capital which may generate a kind of social or civil friendship. In that sense, political friendship is also about civil society. Obviously, such a conception of political friendship that focuses on relational aspects does not have much in common with political friends in power networks. It is rather the result of the collective experience, and a resource for collective action in the public space. John Nixon describes this in Hannah Arendt's terms: "Friendship sustains that world by acknowledging its plurality. Our friendships provide a private space within which to explore the plurality inherent in the friendship itself and from which to re-enter the public space of plurality. They connect us to the world, while enabling us to cope with its complexity" (2015: 188).

Indeed, it is in this passage from the private to the public sphere or in the conflation of the distinction of private/public where the different meanings of political friendship

can be revealed. These meanings are either in the sense of power networks or corruption avoiding or marginalizing the public space, or in the sense of collective action in the public space based on the mobilization of private networks. This is particularly relevant when considering the fact that the private/public distinction as a necessary condition of a modern rule-of-law-based liberal state points to the meaning of the political in society, that is, to the distinction between the political sphere and other social spheres (Sales, 1991). Rule-of-law-based political regimes are supposed to protect and maintain the private/public distinction, whereas autocracies have abolished it or simulate a fake copy of the public space. When the political is disappearing or when even a distorted version public space is no longer visible, then the space for collective action and for civic political friendship is also fading away. That is also what Hannah Arendt has in mind when warning against the disappearance of the plurality of the world and the free play of power represented by the public realm. Then, friendship would lose its access to the world and violence would become a substitute for power (Nixon, 2015: 189f.). We may add here that friendship would be reduced to networks of power or private friendships disconnected from the public realm. A personalized power structure is consubstantial to authoritarian regimes. It would not be an exaggeration to state that autocracies are aiming at personalizing politics and other social spheres, for their obsession is control of plurality, and the control of deviation.

Therefore, we may once more underline that depersonalized relations and the public realm are ideally expected to coincide in modern society. Modernity can certainly not be located on the side of personalized or the proximity side of the distinction of personalized/depersonalized. This does not mean that modern society is based only on depersonalized contacts. On the contrary, modernity requires specific distinctions, particularly the possibility of making a distinction between private and public communications or spaces, and between personalized and depersonalized relations. In fact, society would not be possible without personal relations consisting of everyday contacts based on personal interaction. As such, however, such relations must be reproduced in a sea of depersonalized relations. A functionally differentiated society with highly complex systems for the solution of specific political, economic, or scientific problems could not be understood simply based on personal interactions. It is precisely in modern society where personal relations may become a problem, as for example, old-boy networks or clientelism in the political or the economic system where they might be identified as corrupt behavior. It requires established democracies and markets in order to discover that too many "good connections" may undermine democratic and market rules, if they avoid or short-circuit established and legal procedures to gain an advantage.

On the other hand, we can also see how the structures of a modern democratized political system ideally represent the *depersonalized* background in form of institutions, organizations, and procedures, which not only enables the *personalized* political games of political actors (political parties and the corresponding networks of political friends) focused on gaining political power, but also offers the space for collective action (civil society), and the mobilization of *personal* networks in the sense of civic friendship.

v

In fact, political friendship as we have already presented it in terms of civic friendship implies a depersonalized society in a modern sense. This can be specified with the help of the concept of trust which is consubstantial to friendship in the relational sense, as well as in the more general sense of a public-space-oriented civic friendship. Trust, depersonalization, and the arm's-length principle go together, at least in rule-of-law-based democracies. What can be seen is that the depersonalization of society implies also a depersonalization of trust, a shift from personal trust to general and systemic trust. Personal trust towards relatives and friends may still be important in every day personal interactions, but society is no longer based on personal relations held together by personal trust. Generalized or extended trust among strangers is the adequate form of trust in a depersonalized society of strangers (Uslaner, 2002; Rothstein, 2005; Reiser, 1999). Some authors present this form of trust as moralistic since it is not based primarily on personal experiences, but can be considered as "the belief that others share your fundamental moral values and therefore should be treated as you would wish to be treated by them" (Uslaner, 2002: 18). Generalized trust, then, is about sharing basic values with regard to reliable and honest behavior. Generalized trust is about norms of reciprocity, and about the expectation of reciprocity. This is, in fact, part of a definition of social capital, which points to these specific values shared by the members of a community allowing them to cooperate. Obviously, these values cannot be the values of a criminal gang which also needs a great deal of social capital in order to be efficient. Rather, they point, again, to universal moral values in society, to virtues such as truth-telling, meeting obligations, and reciprocity (Fukuyama, 2000: 99).

The radius of trust in society depends on the degree to which people share common values when it comes to solving collective problems by cooperating with each other. Such values of reciprocity should not be mixed up with the values of reciprocity shared by most families in the world. In this case, one speaks of personal trust, not of trust among strangers, and that is the point here, which depends on the conditions of trust outside the family systems (kinship) or of personal networks between friends. General, systemic, and institutional trust are aspects of modernity. Thus, looking at how specific countries in different regions of the world society have realized different mixes of private and public relationships, personalism and depersonalized institutions, or of personal and general trust conveys much about how these regions cope with modernity. According to the "radius of trust" in a particular society, one could distinguish, with Fukuyama's distinction (1995: 61ff., 149ff.) between "low trust societies," with familialism and personalism representing one pole, and "high trust societies" representing the opposite pole. This approximates what could be called Max Weber's ideal of arm's-length relations, of trust in public life, or with regard to organizations such as state bureaucracies, social security systems, political parties, interest groups, or companies. This distinction overlaps with the distinction between "warm" and "cold" societies to a certain degree. To be more precise, it points to the importance of traditional values in modern or modernizing societies. A country

dominated by personalism and a lack of general trust can also be expected to fail in its fight against corruption. Conversely, where political, economic and legal institutions have, through their symbolic efficiency, created cultural settings which allows generalized trust to develop between people ("high trust societies"), one should also expect that the mutual reinforcement of institutional efficiency, shared values, and trust should work against corrupt behavior.

Moreover, we should keep in mind that the evolution from a culture of distrust to a culture of trust will be difficult in countries where society is considered by many as fundamentally unequal, as populated by "hostile strangers," or dominated by "alien values." Why should you trust the institutions, politics, the elites, or simply the world beyond your family and the wider "family" of your friends if this world is, if perceived in "Hobbesian" terms, full of discriminations and exclusions, inequalities, greed, crime, and corruption? On the other hand, things are different from a "top down" perspective since personal trust and trustworthiness are means of achieving and maintaining power for political elites and their networks of power.

<div style="text-align:center">VI</div>

At this point, we can return to civic friendship and relate it to general trust. Sharing values and mutual goodwill are also key aspects of personal and intimate friendship. However, in the political context or in modern society where individuals and citizens do not know each other, political friendship can manifestly not mean personal relational friendship, as in the case of generalized trust with regard to personal trust. This is why Martin Hartmann (2011: 463) speaks of an "extended notion of friendship" which he integrates in a theory of a praxis of trust. He points here to John M. Cooper's interpretation of what Aristotle presented as civic friendship, a special kind of friendship: "Where civic friendship characterizes a population there exists, as a recognized and accepted norm, a certain measure of mutual good will, and also mutual trust, among the people making up the population" (Cooper, 1999: 370f.). Citizens do not need to know each other personally to know about the mutual good. In the political context, knowledge of the nature of the constitution and "of what's generally expected of people in that society is the normal way of knowing about these things, and it is sufficient, sometimes, to establish a reasonable presumption of good will on the part of one's fellow-citizens generally" (Cooper, 1999: 371, fn. 18; Hartmann, 2011: 436). Similarly, John von Heyking observes that "political pluralism is embedded within a like-mindedness expressed in terms of constitutionalism, which itself expresses social friendship and hence agreement concerning the highest things human ought to do. Ambition counteracting ambition is constrained by agreement on constitutional fundamentals, expressed as a social friendship that prevents such conflict from degenerating into fratricidal war" (Von Heyking, 2016: 11).

Indeed, citizens are supposed to share certain values or agree on what is expressed by their Constitution, and therefore should be able and willing to express a kind of generalized trust vis-a-vis strangers and the authorities. However, it is not clear nowadays what is

meant by sharing certain values or, said differently, to fix the "radius of trust" (Fukuyama 2000: 99) in a national society. Obviously, trust is only possible within certain boundaries which are also the boundaries of citizenship (Hartmann 2011: 464). Democracies run into difficulties when the radius of trust and the common good orientation are no longer convincing criteria in explaining to the citizens of a political community what holds them together, or why they should live together as a nation.

In any case, we can see that these different strands of the notion of civic friendship focusing on good will, shared norms, general trust, and the common good are parts of the classic legacy founded by Aristotle's typology of friendship. These parts are attempts to describe society, and moreover the political, the political community, or the classical "polis," based on a notion of friendship combining its private and public aspects. Friendship realizes circles of a moral community encompassing primary personal friends, as well as the citizenry of the "polis" (Nixon, 2015: 51). In this perspective, the extension of friendship from the private to the public points to the moral conditions of civic and political order. This is confirmed by Hannah Arendt's conception of "politics of friendship," where "Politics is, as it were, ethically grounded in the "truthful dialogue" that constitutes friendship" (Nixon, 2015: 52). To be sure, modern society can no longer be described in terms of the classical political and moral community. Modern politics is not rooted in a normative premise where its objective should be the realization of the normative good, although constitutions may describe such objectives. Nevertheless, political systems operate on a specific territory as Nation-States. As such, political systems cannot avoid establishing descriptions of what they are good for, for example, to guarantee their citizens prosperity, or freedom, or to define who can and should be citizens based on well-defined criteria. In a democratized context, nations are constantly reflecting the question of whether or to what extent the established political order is adequate and corresponds to what citizens want. In other terms, they produce political theories about the conditions of democracy, or imagine themselves as political communities based on shared values as expressed through civic friendship.

Civic friendship then could denote several things. It is first a political discourse about the public space in democracy. Political philosophy starts its reflection on political friendship by pointing hypothetically to the consequences of the absence of friendship and its correlates, be it plurality, diversity, dialogue, public, or collective action in the sense of Hannah Arendt (Nixon, 2015: 28, 189; König, 2013: 901ff.). As a matter of fact, the political theory on civic friendship, in either aspect of its civil society of collective action or as political community, is a critique of authoritarian and even totalitarian conceptions of society, of homogeneity, hierarchy, and conceptions of unity. All such conceptions negate the very idea of the political which needs the political space to express social autonomy and its conflicts.

In fact, any description of politics or society that pretends to be the only right one is totalitarian and inevitably provokes opposition. Unity necessarily produces differences and new identities based on different distinctions. This fits quite well with what Claude Lefort expresses in the idea of "disincarnation." Social reality can neither be incarnated

nor represented by a hierarchy, whether the state or a party organization. This comes close to Hanna Arendt's idea about the "free play of power" and the corresponding diverse perspectives, that if restricted, would give access to violence (Nixon, 2015: 189). Power is inevitably an empty place. As Niklas Luhmann puts it in a sociological perspective, state power is an exchangeable, unstable, and divided position based on the distinction between government and opposition (Luhmann, 1990: 167ff., 231ff.). Under modern conditions, sovereign power is nothing more than the contingent possibility to remain in power or to be in the opposition. This is the very essence of democratized power. Such a double codification of the political system works against the moralization of the power position, which would reintroduce the distinction of friends and enemies based on the pretension of being in a morally superior position.

Modern politics, however, needs and involves antagonists and opponents. This crucial difference between enemies and opponents (Edelmann, 1991: 131) and between antagonism and agonism (Mouffe, 2005) points to the core of the political in modern society and also to the problem of morals in politics. As soon as opponents are conceived of in categories of good or bad, or friend or enemy, eliminating the other becomes the main aim of political action. In this case, friendship also would disappear, for friendship cannot be defined with regard to enmity as Helmut König (2013: 903f.) correctly points out; the brother and not the friend would be the correct term in this positioning of "we against the others." On the other hand, the acceptance of the other as the antagonist implies competition focused on political victory, and not on elimination. Political victory can be obtained only by respecting the rules of the game and established procedures which are shared and respected by all players in the political game. The political and the public realm are definitely not the space of the Schmittian distinction friends/enemies, but a structure institutionalizing the idea of talking, dialogue and discussion. This is diversity against unity. The actually observable "revival" or "return" of nationalist and populist parties and leaders are bringing back the contrary: unity instead of diversity, an obsession with exclusive homogeneity-concepts such as the nation, brotherhood, ethnicity, kinship, family, and more. Populists need enemies as scapegoats, whereas civic friendship insists on plurality and diversity excluding enmity. The political theory of civic friendship is also a warning against the destructive consequences of exclusive populist political discourses and ideologies for democratic politics. The risk of the abuse of power is continuously evoked by this political theory, but it is not really integrated in a more general or classic conception of the countervailing powers in the political system.

The prevention of the abuse of trust and power is certainly among the most important functions of political institutions in a complex web of countervailing powers. Therefore, in a modern and complex society, the common good along with the public realm are as much the however-aggregated result of one sphere of action as it is the result of effective state institutions, like the markets, for example ('self-interest'), or of civil society (volunteering). In this perspective, the idea of civic friendship would point to several aspects of civil society as described by Edward Michaels (2014). Michaels writes that civil society is about the practices of associative life as well as about shared norms, the common good,

and the public sphere which are the loci of dialogue politics already evoked by Hannah Arendt. That fits quite well with the idea of civic friendship relating to the relational and organizational aspects of collective action *and* shared norms to be expressed and negotiated in the public sphere.

Moreover, civic friendship expresses many aspects of the notions of political culture, and civic culture in particular focuses on the cultural conditions for citizens to cooperate (Lichtermann, 2012: 208). Civic friendship is also a reflection of the possibilities of collective action, or on the underlying conditions and representations making cooperation possible or more difficult, depending on the political context in which civic actions take place. Civic friendship is also a political theory, reflecting democracy in a time of the erosion of democratic politics and culture, and of the "politics of truth" in a populist "post-truth" arena. Finally, it is a genuinely democratic political theory which as "republican friendship binds together the citizens of good judgment communicating their mutual judgments on the basis of truthfulness" (Gebhardt, 2008: 336; Nixon, 2015: 52, 182ff.). In this regard, Jürgen Gebhardt (2008: 342) concludes accurately that citizens are living together by virtue of the binding force of trust. This is also the final destination of political friendship, the linking of friendship to the political order as a common order implying common meanings, purpose, and action. This could also be formulated with a "Durkheimian approach" in the sense that the "discourse of friendship is not personal, except in the sense that it confirms the sacredness of the person and links the individual to the "personality" of the collective" (Mallory, Carlson, 2014: 8). In such a "French approach," friendship is a "collective representation" of beliefs and ideals about living together which are instituted in institutions and practices, and can be analyzed. However, the political of the political theory of friendship is not simply a normative program "prescribing friendship as a normative ideal which strangers and citizens should adopt" (Mallory, Carlson, 2014: 13). Civic friendship is not just something that is translated into constitutional norms. In relation with theories of trust, civil society, civic, and political culture, it is much more about the practices and expectations in society about how to live, to work together or how to communicate politically in order to influence politics, or to change things. After all, protests against specific policies or political regimes or other forms of collective action *publicly* express real claims about how democracy should work. Moreover, a look at authoritarian politics reveals *e contrario* what society loses when the public space of the "truthful dialogue" is abolished. In a personalized informal power structure, political friends may be helpful to stay in power or to reproduce networks of corruption. These "political friends" will also resist the democratization of politics, for such a change would also mean the loss of their power. It would mean the re-establishment of a public space where society and its citizens can again reflect on what holds them together and what they want to share. Even if the perspectives of political theory and political sociology are different, the reflection on civic friendship and the conditions of democracy may produce the same conclusions.

Bibliography

Cooper J. M. (1999) *Reason and Emotion: Essays on Ancient Moral Psychology and Ethical Theory*, Princeton: Princeton University Press

Derrida J. (1999) *Politiques de l'amitié*, Paris: Galilée.

Descharmes B., Heuser E. A., Kruger C., Loy Th. (eds.) (2011) *Varieties of Friendship: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Social Relationships*, Göttingen: V&R unipress.

Devere H. (2011) Introduction: The Resurrection of Political Friendship: Making Connections. *Varieties of Friendship: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Social Relationships* (eds. B. Descharmes, E. A. Heuser, C. Kruger, Th. Loy), Göttingen: V&R unipress, pp. 17–42.

Edelmann M. (1991) *Pièces et règles du jeu politique*, Paris: Seuil.

Edwards M. (2014) *Civil Society*, Cambridge: Polity Press.

Fukuyama F. (1995) *Trust: The Social Virtues and the Creation of Prosperity*, Harmondsworth: Penguin.

Fukuyama F. (2000) Social Capital. *Culture Matters* (eds. L. E. Harrison, S. P. Huntington), New York: Basic Books, pp. 98–111.

Gebhardt J. (2008) Friendship, Trust, and Political Order. *Friendship and Politics: Essays in Political Thought* (eds. J. Von Heykin, R. Avramenko), Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, pp. 313–348.

Gurr J. (2008) Freundschaft und politische Macht: Freunde, Gönner, Getreue Margaret Thatchers und Tony Blairs, Göttingen: V&R unipress.

Gurr J. (2011) Emotions and Rationality: The Thatcher–Reagan and the Blair–Brown Relationship. *Varieties of Friendship: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Social Relationships* (eds. B. Descharmes, E. A. Heuser, C. Kruger, Th. Loy), Göttingen: V&R unipress, pp. 223–238.

Hahn A. (2012) Zur Soziologie der Freundschaft. *Freundschaft: Theorien und Poetiken* (Hrsg. M. Katharina, Ch. Reidenbach), München: Wilhelm Fink, pp. 67–78.

Hartmann M. (2011) *Die Praxis des Vertrauens*, Frankfurt: Suhrkamp

Helmke G., Levitsky S. (2004) Informal Institutions and Comparative Politics: A Research Agenda. *Perspectives on Politics*, vol. 2, no 4, pp. 725–740.

Katharina M., Reidenbach Ch. (Hrsg.) (2015) Freundschaft: Theorien und Poetiken. München: Wilhelm.

Kersten C. (2008) *Orte der Freundschaft: Niklas Luhmann und "Das Meer in mir,"* Berlin: Kulturverlag Kadmos.

König H. (2013) Freundschaft. *Merkur*, 67. Jahrgang, Heft 773, pp. 893–904.

Krass A. (2016) *Ein Herz und eine Seele: Geschichte der Männerfreundschaft*. Frankfurt: Fischer.

Leanza M. (2014) Zentren und Ränder funktionaler Differenzierung: Niklas Luhmanns Theorie der modernen Gesellschaft. *Gründungsszenen soziologischer Theorie* (eds. S. Farzin, H. Laux), Wiesbaden: Springer, pp. 155–174.

Lefort C. (1981) *L'invention démocratique*, Paris: Seuil.

Leuschner V. (2011a) Playing the Field: Dealing with Interpersonal Relationships in the Political Arena. *Varieties of Friendship: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Social Relationships* (eds. B. Descharmes, E. A. Heuser, C. Kruger, Th. Loy), Göttingen: V&R unipress, pp. 205–222.

Leuschner V. (2011b) *Politische Freundschaften: Informelle Beziehungen im Deutschen Bundestag*, Baden-Baden: Nomos.

Lichtermann P. (2012) Reinventing the Concept of Civil Culture. *The Oxford Handbook of Cultural Sociology* (eds. J. C. Alexander, R. N Jacobs, P. Smith), Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 207–231.

Luhmann N. (1981) Wie ist soziale Ordnung möglich? *Gesellschaftsstruktur und Semantik: Studien zur Wissenssoziologie der modernen Gesellschaft, Bd. 2*, Frankfurt: Suhrkamp, S. 195–285.

Luhmann N. (1986) *Love as Passion*, Cambridge: Polity Press.

Luhmann N. (1990) *Political Theory in the Welfare State*, Berlin: de Gruyter.

Luhmann N. (1995) Kausalität im Süden. *Soziale Systeme*, Heft 1, S. 7–28.

Luhmann N. (2010) *Politische Soziologie*, Frankfurt: Suhrkamp.

Luhmann N. (2012) *Theory of Society, Vol. 1*, Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Mallory P. (2012) Political Friendship in the Era of "the Social": Theorizing Personal Relations with Alexis de Tocqueville. *Journal of Classical Sociology*, vol. 12, no 1, p. 22–42.

Mallory P., Carlson J. (2014) Rethinking Personal and Political Friendship with Durkheim. *Distinktion*, vol. 15, no 3, pp. 327–342.

Mouffe C. (2005) *On the Political*, London: Routledge.

Nixon J. (2015) *Hannah Arendt and the Politics of Friendship*, London: Bloomsbury.

Pannes T. (2011) Dimensionen informellen Regierens: Entstehungsbedingungen, Ausprägungen und Anforderungen. *Organisation, Steuerung und Politikformulierung zwischen Formalität und Informalität* (Hrsg. M. Florack, T. Grunden), Wiesbaden: VS, pp. 35–92.

Reiser M. (1999) *Trust in Transition*. European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, Working Paper no 39.

Rothstein B. (2005) *Social Traps and the Problem of Trust*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sales A. (1991) The Private, the Public and Civil Society: Social Realms and Power Structures. *International Political Science Review*, vol. 12, no 4, pp. 295–312.

Schobin J., Leuschner V., Flick S., Alleweldt E., Heuser E. A., Brandt A. (2016) *Freundschaft heute: Eine Einführung in die Freundschaftssoziologie*, Bielefeld: transcript.

Tanzi V. (2000) *Policies, Institutions and the Dark Side of Economics*, Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

Uslaner E. (2002) *The Moral Foundations of Trust*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Von Heyking J. (2016) *The Form of Politics: Aristotle and Plato on Friendship*, Montreal: McGill-Queen's University.

Политическая дружба, демократия и модерн

Николя Айо
Доцент кафедры политологии, директор Междисциплинарного института Центральной
и Восточной Европы в Университете Фрибура (Швейцария)
Адрес: Bd de Pérolles 90, Fribourg, Switzerland 1700
E-mail: nicolas.hayoz@unifr.ch

В современном обществе дружба по-видимому относится к области частного. Возникновение дружбы в публичном пространстве связывают с коррупцией. Это тем более применимо к друзьям в политике, то есть к ситуациям, когда дружба является частью неформального политического процесса, направленного на получение доступа к политической власти или ее удержанию. Этот реляционный аспект политической дружбы необходимо отличать от более структурного и институционального понимания политической дружбы, которое политическая философия дает в терминах «гражданской дружбы». В этом и содержится смысл политического, в рамках которого публичное пространство существует в условиях, которые должны быть обеспечены для конфликтной политической коммуникации или коллективного политического действия. В этом смысле идея и теория «гражданской дружбы» указывает на реляционные и организационные аспекты коллективного действия, а также на те разделяемые нормы, которые выражаются и обсуждаются в публичной сфере. Ни одна серьезная социологическая теория не может обойти тот факт, что сегодня демократии во многих регионах мира находятся под угрозой, поскольку утрачено понимание, где пролегают границы доверия и, следовательно, гражданства, а также того, что позволяет людям сосуществовать, особенно, в контексте глобализации и миграции. В отношении теорий доверия гражданская дружба представляет собой гражданское общество, гражданскую и политическую культуру, включающую практики и ожидания в обществе по поводу того, как жить и работать вместе, как общаться политически, чтобы влиять на политику, и как менять вещи вокруг себя. Наконец, политическая теория дружбы также предостерегает от злоупотребления властью и возрождения единства и вражды в обществе на основе различий и множественности перспектив.

Ключевые слова: дружба, враги, доверие, политика, политическое, современное общество, Никлас Луман, Ханна Арендт, гражданство