

Introduction

The problem

This book is about friendship between sovereign political agents, whose role in the modern world is performed by states. However, not all the political friends that feature in this book fit contemporary ideas about state and sovereignty, unless we anachronistically describe as states agents acting on behalf of aggregate entities or representing their own realms in the classical and early modern periods. This book therefore focuses on relations of friendship that bind together whole polities. What this book is not about are international networks of individuals forged, for instance, during student exchange programmes; NGOs advocating international friendship; relations between sister-cities and regions belonging to different states; and friendship of peoples, unless represented as sovereign actors in the international realm.

Friendship among nations or friendship between states constitutes a distinct kind of friendship. It has a global reach and millennia-old history, but still it remains tremendously paradoxical. We commonly hear leaders of states professing friendship towards one another. For example, US president George W. Bush and Russian president Vladimir Putin famously called one another friends, but this did not have a significant impact on relations between the two great powers, and the relationship had to be 'reset' under Barack Obama. The European Union Neighbourhood Policy was enacted with reference to the idea of a 'ring of friends'. Observers portray some countries – for example the US and the UK – as good old friends. Elsewhere, web pages are inundated with this type of acclamatory friendship rhetoric. However, such rhetoric does not stop at proclamations. Turning to more formal and binding practices, we find an astonishing number of friendship treaties that states and their historical predecessors concluded throughout documented diplomatic history. A key protagonist in recent international history was the Soviet Union, whose friends, surprisingly or not, instantly turned into cold-hearted neighbours, at best, once the superpower dissolved. Apart from bilateral friendships, the world has seen multiple attempts to posit friendship as the true foundation of a properly organised international community, ranging from the World Alliance for Promoting International Friendship

through Churches (1914–1947) and Woodrow Wilson's description of the statute of the League of Nations in terms of friendship, to the United Nations *Declaration on Principles of International Law Concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States*. In fact, making formal friendship is as old as the hills in world history. But despite, or perhaps because of, the universality of the practice, a common popular attitude is to question whether the statesmen and – women involved really mean what they say. As 2013 was marked by a protracted row over alleged US monitoring of the communications of private citizens and state leaders seen as America's best friends in Europe, thus effectively undermining any claims of trust built among friends, the implied answer certainly is that all such friendship rhetoric is lip service. Such friendships are rarely, if ever, perceived as true friendship.

Despite prolific discourses and a multiplicity of concluded treaties, this suspicion towards friendship is not uncommon among students of international relations (IR). In fact, friendship as a term is shared by virtually all the languages of rival theories of IR, including Realism (Dunne and Schmidt 2001; Morgenthau 2005: 183; Snyder 1997: 32; Waltz 2000: 10). However, hardly any school of thought turns friendship between states into a separate object of analysis, presuming that egoistic concerns for their own constituencies and attempts to increase their own security and material gains in the competitive environment render the world of states no place for serious friendship. In light of this interpretation, it is not surprising that the subject of friendship is anything but conventional, and thus it remains understudied (Wendt 1999: 298).¹ Therefore, speaking seriously of friendship between states risks being labelled unrealistic, naïve or wishful thinking. In this sense, academic and non-academic discourses often share the same assumptions about the nature of international friendship: namely, they juxtapose it with familiar examples of friendship between individuals that imply a high degree of emotional attachment, sincerity, trust and refraining from seeking advantages from the relationship.²

From this perspective, there are only two basic roles, not necessarily mutually exclusive, that friendship can play in the discourses on international relations. The first is as an anthropomorphic metaphor for the relations between states. Here, international friendship cannot be claimed to be friendship in the full sense of the word, but within these limitations it may refer to various kinds of cooperative, peaceful or benevolent relations between states. This includes Carl Schmitt's famous definition of the political as the distinction between friend and enemy (1996: 26), which migrates into a realist understanding of international

¹ For an overview of the emerging field of friendship studies see Devere and Smith (2010); the Journal *Amity* was launched in 2013 in an attempt to start filling this gap.

² For an example of such post-war idealist and religious argument defending friendship between nations see Dickinson (1927: 440).

politics. The second role involves significantly more than merely metaphorical language. It functions as a constituent part of a normative argument seeking a change in international relations that would transform their foundations from fear and conflict to trust, cooperation and sincere friendship. Some realist thinkers even go so far as to imply a remote possibility of the first function giving way to the second. For instance, Arnold Wolfers in *Discord and Collaboration* proposed that 'close and effective interstate amity as among allies should tend to promote emotional friendship' (Wolfers 1962: 33; see also Snyder 1997: 146 for similar observations).

However, there is an emerging area of scholarship that takes the second role of friendship in international politics seriously and tries to portray such relations in terms of trust, reciprocity, respect, mutual help, care and genuine emotional attachment (see, for instance, Eznack and Koschut 2014; Schwarzenbach 2009: 254–261). Were it not for the popular concept that appeals to friendship are metaphorical in nature and popular suspicion of statesmen and -women who stress their 'true' friendship, such scholarship would have promised an entirely new perspective on the (im)possibility of international anarchy. It can be achieved by refocusing attention on the basic structures of international partnerships and agreements (Onuf 2009: 8–9), on ways of mitigating anxiety in international politics instead of plunging into a vicious circle of security dilemmas (Berenskoetter 2007), on means of building regional peace instead of balancing (Oelsner 2007); and, more generally, by providing a structural role as friends (instead of 'enemies' or 'rivals') for states that share a single set of political values and economic priorities and thus express commitment to a single international community and culture of cooperation (Wendt 1999: 298–299).

Such a portrayal of international politics involves a good deal of anthropomorphism and inevitably moralisation of international friendship, because its expected elements are derived from the model of friendship between individuals and its related code of ethics. Certainly, proponents of this approach admit 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' (Lu 2009: 43). Some also claim that the analogy cannot be complete because states 'are ontologically incapable of having feelings' (Digeser 2009a: 324–337; 2009b: 28–32). Nevertheless, the model of friendship between individuals serves as a convenient vantage point for this approach 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' (Lu 2009: 43). The model of individual friendship thus prompts observers to cast international friendship in deeply moral terms, thereby providing standards against which we can make normative judgements about the depth, partiality and sincerity of diplomatic relations. Such normativity has become an intrinsic

element in this thriving scholarship, and possibly in our overall (post-)modern understanding of international friendship. On the one hand, this perspective serves as a guideline for those defending a critical and reformist stance towards the vectors of international politics and provides a checklist of criteria for those seeking to analyse overlooked friendly relations between states; on the other, it simultaneously infuses many others with insurmountable scepticism about states' ability to comply with high moral standards.

Indeed, no matter how strictly one posits the reservations about the limits of the analogy, critics of this emerging scholarship have noted that speaking seriously about the concept of friendship in the realm of international politics is bound to entail the risk of 'over-analogy and moral fetishism'. This is due to incongruent types of reciprocation between persons and countries, and to standards of impartial public morality and partial morality in private life assigning an inherent moral value to a chosen person (see Keller 2009: 60–65). By and large, it is a familiar argument upon which even such diverse classic writers for contending IR traditions as Norman Angell and E.H. Carr could agree. Both Angell and Carr insisted on the difference between individual and state morality; the latter cannot include things such as love, hatred and other intimate emotions. Thus, Angell discards the analogy between state and individual as false, because self-sacrifice, while praised among individuals, is something that states cannot afford. Moreover, it is psychologically impossible to have affection for millions of people living in a different country (1913: 370–376). Similarly, Carr admits that moral impulses are possible in high politics and that states can be altruistic, but only when they can afford it. This being rare, he notes that even individuals often expect states to be immoral and to prioritise the welfare of their own citizens, thereby discriminating against others. For this reason, Carr dismisses as misplaced the idea of the famous eighteenth-century jurist Christian Wolff that nations should love other nations as themselves (Carr 2001: 143–151).

In fact, this debate over the applicability of friendship and the limits of analogy – which divides observers into the believers of the emerging school of friendship studies and non-believers who are prepared to speak of friendship among states only metaphorically – stems from a common basic assumption intimated above. Both sceptics and believers view friendship along the lines suggested by the ideals of private relations with the ensuing moralisation of all relations so labelled. The difference between these two supposed poles is a matter of degree: some are more prepared to take the analogy seriously and some less, but both see friendship as a moralised practice inherent in human nature. This is the reason why we may feel uncomfortable when relations between states or their leaders are described in terms of friendship. It is also why we cannot account for the prolific rhetoric and institutionalisation of friendship in diplomacy and international politics at large. This sums up the impasse of modern thinking about friendship among nations. A theoretically and politically important question is why we have such

an impasse at all and why we have come to recognise an ethical perspective on friendship as the only meaningful way of talking about it.

Questioning the present

The question of how natural this political and disciplinary impasse is, and in fact how contingent it is upon visions of modern international society, can be answered by contrasting it with distant yet recognisable past and other disciplinary domains. The sense of paradox is augmented once we look for conceptions of friendship in fields such as histories of classical political thought and Roman law, in which friendship is not at all an unusual subject and is not a matter of critical valuation of political situations under scrutiny.³ This is not because relations between political communities in the ancient world were radically better than in our own time, but rather because ancient political practice contained different concepts of friendship that were not necessarily connected to the domains of ethics and normative judgement. Thus, what the modern impasse indicates is nothing less than a conceptual rupture between the past and the present signifying a range of political choices about what should belong to the modern international society of sovereign states and what is bound to be unintelligible. Granted an evolving nature of international society, questioning the conditions that maintain such a rupture becomes a pressing intellectual and political concern.

This study ventures to investigate the nature and conditions of the conceptual change(s) that rendered the classical and presumably alternative concept(s) of friendship virtually unknown and irrelevant to present-day scholarship. In so doing it will explain why friendship is one of the most popular concepts in diplomacy, international law and politics, and yet cannot be analysed as anything other than a moral phenomenon. In other words, this study will offer a perspective on friendship that explicates its functions within the overall international order and the reasons why it was lost in past academic, philosophical and diplomatic debates. It will demonstrate how contingent this loss was on the political rationality of those debates and why the recovered perspective may help us to understand the continuing practice of making friendship among states, as well as the rhetoric of friendship used on some occasions to praise diplomatic engagement and on others swiftly bent to become a morally powerful instrument of critique.

³ Terms such as 'international', 'foreign' and 'treaty' would be utterly anachronistic in an analysis of ancient political practice. Therefore, all instances of such terms henceforth do not represent an attempt to make the phenomena of the ancient world fit our modern categories. Rather, my use of the terms is analytical and only helps the reader to identify the subjects and areas referred to in the analysis.

At least two objections can immediately be raised to the relevance of contrasting friendships of the moderns and ancients. First, today's political and social realities are fundamentally different from those of the ancients. Thus, their conceptual apparatus may not be adequate to grasp the subtleties of modern or post-modern political practice. Secondly, classical teachings on friendship such as Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* or Cicero's *On Friendship* are still parts of our intellectual heritage and appear on curriculums of political theory. Hence, the claim that the concept has been lost might be without substance.

However, the problem of contemporary scholarship lies precisely in its selective focus on classical ethics of friendship. References to authority of the classical injunctions on ethics may not only affirm an all too powerful narrative in the history of political thought, but also frame and constrain our own discussion of contemporary friendship. This original prioritisation of the ethical dimension of friendship is one of the key means to perpetuate a theoretically constraining impasse about political friendship. By grounding our visions in ancient ethical theories, solidified by tradition, we make a choice that helps us overlook a range of other political and international friendships. Thus, current political theorising about friendship tends to ignore a plethora of classical views and references to, for instance, contractual and legal friendship. This is despite the fact that historians and jurists considered these works canonical at least until the seventeenth century, when, as I shall maintain, the ethical and normative perspective on friendship established an intellectual monopoly. Thus, the scope of currently prevailing understanding of friendship and the ways we speak about it might not necessarily be of our own making. Certain present-day wisdoms and observations were formulated in earlier epochs and debates, and we simply take them for granted as standards for our own conduct. In doing so, we adapt a number of ancient relics to present-day practice and make them actual elements of our lives at the level of both language and behaviour.

For instance, Aristotle's notion of friendship is no doubt an artefact of his own time and for this reason alone can be deemed alien to our own culture. However, it inevitably becomes an integral part of our social reality and normative code by way of learning, teaching and citing in scholarly and didactic narratives. Of course, classical teachings are rarely received in one complete package. Theories and concepts are dissolved into constituent elements and appropriated selectively according to the vision and aims of the interested agents. At this point we should ask why it has become natural for contemporary political theorists and IR scholars to look at the writings of Aristotle, Cicero and others for ethical and normative perspectives on friendship, and why it has become *the only way* of understanding the concept (for an exception see Smith 2011). At the same time, if we admit that inter-national friendship seen from an ethical and normative perspective fails to convince a significant number of observers, we should also ask whether this perspective, popularised in the early modern era, prevents us from

conceptualising forms of political/'international' friendship familiar to classical authors, their early modern interpreters and modern historians of Antiquity.

Thus, in an attempt to understand the nature of existing theoretical impasse, in this book I follow modern scholarship in tracing conceptions of political friendship back to classical authors. However, I then offer an alternative genealogy that highlights what a theoretical choice, privileging the discussion of ethics, can tell us about our contemporary international society. This alternative genealogy starts with restoring legitimacy to what is commonly discarded as irrelevant, that is, conventional practices described by the Aristotelian concept 'friendship of utility' (Aristotle *NE* VIII, 3–6). I argue that this *political* concept of friendship from classical heritage was still available to sixteenth- and seventeenth-century European theologians, jurists and philosophers, who commonly glossed upon its ancient and contemporary application. Re-affirming the plurality of perspectives on political friendship in the classical as well as in the early modern period is key to revealing the contingency of the contemporary divide that exists between sceptic and normative arguments. In fact, reconstructing such plurality would be a precondition for a genealogical investigation that would identify points at which it discontinues and a conceptual change occurs that inaugurates a whole new way of thinking about friendship between modern sovereign states that ultimately overrides a political argument by ethical concerns.

The argument

The central argument of this book is that our current understanding of friendship between states, and international society in general, is informed by a profound conceptual change that occurred in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. As a result of this change, the alternative concepts of political friendship deployed according to the rules of particular rhetorical genres, ranging from discussions of treaty terms to celebrations of heroic friendships, were effectively replaced with a master ethical and 'naturalistic' perspective. This study posits that central to understanding the transition to modern international society and the formation of early international regimes is the identification of such discarded perspectives on political, contractual and pragmatic friendship. This currently discarded concept can be found not only in ancient political thought; but it was also a conventional element of a less distant past: learned juridical and political discourses of early modernity recognised friendship as one of the central diplomatic practices, as a type of relationship that is conditional upon negotiated terms and obligations, and as having implications for the exercise of sovereign/supreme power in relation to various political agents.

This book argues that the loss of pragmatic and contractual understanding of friendship in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries has left today's scholarship without the proper means to account for the persisting diplomatic practice

of making friendships and its political effects. It is this conceptual change that allowed, for example, the jurist Christian Wolff in the eighteenth century to put forward the claim that nations ought to be friends and love each other. Re-description of the concept in terms of natural and moral demands was part and parcel of political projects that sought to attach a greater legitimacy to the emerging 'society' of absolutist states. This political rationality had set up an idealistic and normative framework for future generations to theorise friendship among nations, while giving good reasons for contemporaries and later thinkers such as E.H. Carr to remain sceptical.

Recovering a lost perspective on political friendship can help us see how this concept accommodates the issues of power in unequal relations of a divided world and the contingency of forged friendly ties to political circumstances. Thus, it would help us understand friendship as a political agreement, the terms of which could be negotiated, re-negotiated and, possibly, declared void depending on the dynamics of a political situation. Re-introducing this concept would demonstrate that diplomatic rhetoric of friendship is not just lip service, leading us to castigate it as insincere, bogus and unworthy of a serious discussion, but an essential part of generating legitimacy, both domestically and internationally, for the agreed upon policies. The debate opened in this way may eventually transcend the opposition of realism and idealism over the issues of international friendship and rhetoric. As the offered genealogical conceptual history⁴ will demonstrate, concerns over power are inherently linked to the uses of friendship in intellectual debates and diplomatic practices (often, but not always, institutionalised).

Focusing on the nexus of concepts and diplomatic practices is central to the argument of this book, as it shows how deeply friendship was woven into the institutional fabric of an early modern international society, how diplomatic use of the concept helped to constitute the nascent institutions and how it may still be employed in international politics. The book will identify the constitutive functions of friendship, that is, sets of practices designated by the concept domestically and internationally. Highlighting political friendship in the constitution of pre-modern polities challenges a powerful Westphalian narrative about the monopolisation of authority by the sovereign state and recognition of state sovereignty as a foundational principle of a new international system. Identifying the use of friendship in diplomatic relations with similar European polities and polities outside Europe, deemed 'uncivilised' in colonial discourses, will indicate how instrumental this concept was for ensuring the sanctity of agreements in the New and Old Worlds, drawing dividing lines between competing loci of author-

⁴ Conceptual history is a term used predominantly in continental Europe to refer to approaches focusing on the history of concepts. In what follows I will use both terms interchangeably.

ity, facilitating the colonisation of North America and India, and the emergence of new independent states.

This book suggests that without an insight into the institutionalisation and conceptualisation of friendship, research into the expansion of the international society prompted by the founding fathers of the English School (see Bull and Watson 1984) would remain incomplete. The study of the concept of friendship will cast a critical light on the fundamental institutions of international society, such as international law, diplomacy and great power management (on institutions of anarchical society see Bull 2002: 71). The status of 'international law' has been one of the most disputed subjects since John Austin's qualification of international law as international morality (Austin 1885, 1: 231–232). This qualification corresponds to a central IR assumption about anarchy at the international level: there is no central lawgiver, nor an ultimate adjudicator, nor a supreme power that would ensure law enforcement (for a classical distinction of hierarchical and anarchical political orders see Waltz 1979: 114–116). Most influential attempts to rescue international law from this intellectual assault turned to the idea of (international) society, law as a recurrent and observable societal practice, and law as intersubjectively held ideas, that is, to the understanding of law as existing 'between' states rather than law commanded from 'above' (Koskeniemi 2002; Nardin 1999; Oppenheim 1905; Suganami 2008).

However, the nature of international law and obligation remains a politically contested matter. No consensual definition of international law seems to be in view. Against the backdrop of such discontent, Friedrich Kratochwil in his recent 'meditations' suggested that, instead of looking for a definition, it is best to think of international law as a language game and see what it does and how it is played (Kratochwil 2014: particularly 68–74). In this broadly constructivist agenda the focus shifts towards the performative and illocutionary, rather than representative, functions of language and rhetoric. For it is maintained that these functions make certain rules legal and binding (see Onuf 1989: 77–87).

This study focuses on the early modern period when religion and kinship were no longer able to offer rule enforcement; hence alternative tools facilitating compliance were in high demand. It is argued that contractual friendships were among key diplomatic instruments to maintain the binding character of new political arrangements and, thus, to substitute for a lack of central authority. Therefore, it is not accidental that already the Renaissance diplomacy witnessed a sharp rise in friendship agreements (Lesaffer 2002). The authority of friendship could be augmented by nothing other than references to an existing record of making friendships and rhetoric with which relevant audiences were persuaded to observe friendly duties. This study will demonstrate how friendship became constitutive of legal regimes that would be fully developed by way of specialisation only under a modern system. A number of duties and rights pertinent to commerce and navigation, and to a more traditional area of alliance-making,

were accepted by states and princes as a result of formal friendly arrangements, which indicates how instrumental were these extra-legal, although contractual, political means.

Contractual friendship in diplomacy challenged the distinction of anarchy and hierarchy on yet another count. As will be argued, political and contractual friendships were not always made on equal footing. In fact, contrary to a common expectation of equality in friendship, diplomatic relations bearing this name underpinned international hierarchies and the whole project of European colonisation. The rhetoric of friendship proved sensitive to the roles friends needed to perform either by explicitly recognising the superiority of one friend over another or by making parties accept arrangements under which one party would enjoy greater rights over certain critical issues, but not necessarily all (e.g. possession or control over a certain territory or a right to independent foreign policy). In this sense, the study not only posits that the modern international system is compatible with hierarchical orders (cf. Keene 2002; Lake 2009) but also demonstrates how it was brought about and legitimised by rhetoric of friendship in European colonial projects in North America and India in the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries.

This is exactly what research in history of concepts helps us achieve by looking at the peripheries of dominant and habitual perspectives both in space and time. Thus, it would be difficult to ascertain the role of friendship in contemporary international society if one only looked at how, for instance, the Soviets proclaimed friendship and brotherhood with China or members of the Warsaw Pact. Looking at the historical and geographical ‘margins’ of our international society can help us identify practices and principles of modern rules and institutions that nowadays are shuttered by rhetorical recognition of formal state sovereignty. As this study is about concepts, their contestation and negotiation, it will concentrate more on the history of the British Empire and the foundation of the United States of America. Britain was a relative latecomer in the colonisation project, and faced in North America circumstances very different from those in South America. Coercion, which was the key instrument in the Spanish conquest, could not be employed to the same effect in the North. Other means, including numerous agreements of friendship with native peoples, had to be found (for a comparison of Spanish and English colonisation see Acemoglu and Robinson 2013: 20–26). This is the main reason why this study will trace English diplomatic and colonial practices, which I also recognise as one of the main cultural and intellectual limitations of this book.

Changes in the language of ‘international’ agreements are always more incremental than changes motivated by radical turns in intellectual debates, as the former are predicated on the acceptance by parties of an agreement which, in turn, is achieved by couching the subject in recognisable terms limiting the opportunities for contending interpretations. This language, deployed at the

peripheries of European society, has for much of European colonial history retained elements of contractual friendship and their utility to the institutions and norms that make up this society (in international *nomos* friendship replicates a relationship between constituent and constituted power so acutely analysed by Giorgio Agamben in case of sovereignty, law and exception; see Agamben 1998: particularly I: 1–4; 2005: 88). The expansion of European society required negotiating with members-to-be or those to whom membership was denied what had already become an unnoticeable, naturalised norm in relations among members of ‘civilised’ society. While in the European society of states ideas about rules were increasingly seen in terms of natural law, at the periphery rules and compliance often hinged on contingent agreements, in which binding force stemmed from political friendships. For this reason the focus on concepts and linguistic practices reveals that ‘contractual’ and ‘contingent’ arrangements were as important to the emergence of European society of absolute states as was a shift to ‘naturalistic’ theories of law in intellectual debates (cf. Reus-Smit 2009: 104–106). The conceptual change featuring in these debates was one of the reasons why political and legal theory failed to recognise that peripheral practices of building imperial orders and constituting new states proliferated on such curious grounds as political friendship.

One reservation is due, however, about the link of friendship to contract. The contractual concept of friendship that this book seeks to recover with the view to reappraise the constitution of international order does not build on the idea of contract in a strict sense, in which parties make reciprocal promises that can be enforced by law/a law-enforcing agency. Clearly, in international friendships no one other than friends themselves or ‘friends of friends’ can enforce obligations. Therefore, the attribute ‘contractual’ in the concept of contractual friendship denotes only a number of elements that pertain to the idea of a formal contract and grasps only those parts of the language game that emphasise the agreed upon, promised or merely assured obligations. Thus, what this concept will illuminate for the reader are ways in which polities and rulers sought to oblige one another and amplify an accepted/imposed obligation by its subsequent legitimisation. If such friendship does not presuppose external sources of enforcement, we are led to consider ‘extra-legal’ ways to ensure compliance; hence the politics of language games constituting friendly obligations and international orders becomes of ultimate importance.

Studying concepts

Language and politics

Ever since the linguistic turn in social sciences, texts have been understood as forms of contingent political action. Language is therefore not a neutral medium or container of objective means to express views or describe political

phenomena, but is a political tool and manifestation of politics (Austin 1975; Ball 1997; Rorty 1989: chap. 1; Skinner 1989a). The basic assumption behind this understanding, in Peter Winch's famous formulation, is that 'the concepts we have settle for us the form of the experience we have of the world' (Winch 1990: 15; see also Pitkin 1972: 121). It further means that, in order to portray some phenomenon in a positive or negative light – or simply as existing rather than as imaginary – and thereby try to direct public reactions in a profitable way, a political agent has to choose words accordingly and manipulate their application to the case in question.

If politics is about rival interpretations of events and actions couched in carefully selected terms and styled to provoke certain public reactions, we should not assume that language and its constitutive elements are neutral phenomena secondary to politics. Instead, the concepts we have and their application will always be inherently contested by contending political parties. It does not mean that regularities in the use of concepts are impossible, because this would render communication equally impossible. Linguistic conventions are by nature expressions of a temporary social and political status quo, while the politics of contending factions consist in challenging these conventions or extending their application to new cases (for more on these arguments see Skinner 2002a: chapters 4, 8).

My next assumption is that political agents – to the ranks of which I include diplomats, political theorists, jurists, philosophers, publicists and the like – try to win approbation from their immediate audience as a way to achieve their aims. Therefore, the use of concepts and formulation of arguments is contingent upon the specific circumstances of the agents, while their aims are always audience-adjusted. I share this underlying assumption with the burgeoning literature of 'contextualist' international studies, much of which is informed by Quentin Skinner's methodological works on linguistic action (see *inter alia* Armitage 2000; Bell 2007; Jahn 2006; Keene 2002, 2005; Tuck 1999): The concepts and corresponding arguments should not then be taken as responding to eternal truths or describing the essence of eternal phenomena, even if their authors try to appropriate this role for them. Instead, the use of concepts and arguments is tailored to a specific situation of an actor and can be interpreted by way of close scrutiny of the context.

Claims such as this became a major challenge to theories that try to assemble very heterogeneous intellectual contributions made millennia apart under one umbrella of ostensibly universal questions of human nature, power, interest and war. What has become a 'contextualist' and 'historiographic' turn in international relations primarily focusing on international political thought (Armitage 2013; Bell 2002; Holden 2002) effectively questioned the construction of such IR teleologies, or 'Whig' histories (cf. Butterfield 1965), whose main political function was to add legitimacy to contemporary arguments about the nature of politics at the expense of historical accuracy.

Concepts and meaning

Insofar as concepts are inherently contested and used to advocate a specific idea or course of action, we cannot presuppose that concepts have a fixed meaning accessible to anyone regardless of their background. Along the lines of Ludwig Wittgenstein's observation that 'the meaning of a word is its use in the language', it is argued that the meaning of a concept is played out in particular language games (see Wittgenstein 2001: para. 7, 43). Put differently, in a given political context a concept would be used by actors with a view to defend their own distinct, sometimes intersecting but frequently conflicting, views and aims. With these underlying assumptions, fixing the meaning of a concept would be a daunting task.

This is not to say that actors have a free hand in ascribing meaning to a concept, because they need to make sense to their audience in the first place. Statements such as 'war is peace' would only make sense in a particular context, that is, that of George Orwell's '1984'. Thus, to deliver a message successfully an actor would need to follow recognisable linguistic conventions and choose from an available range of things that could be done with the concept in a particular context and time (Palonen 2003: 41; Skinner 2002a: 101–102). The study of concepts would therefore require scrutinising the prevailing conventions, or language games, of a period: who plays the game, by what rules, and to what effect.

To this end, this book will not be searching for the most accurate definitions of 'ethical', 'natural' and 'contractual' concepts of friendship in past contexts, nor will it offer any such. Instead, it will identify the rules of political language games that make up the concepts in question. It will focus on the terminology of friendship (e.g. words that refer to the concept of friendship such as '*amicitia*', '*societas*', '*amitié*', 'amity' and 'friendship'), vocabulary that attributes to friendship certain qualities (e.g. adjectives that describe its psychological, ethical or legal nature), grammar that defines the range of actions that friendship could be made to perform (e.g. verbs that demonstrate how actors make, maintain and use friendships), and any other regularities that indicate the presence of rules, or linguistic conventions, which make the rhetoric of friendship and its comprehension by the relevant audience possible.

Words that help express a concept are basic indicators that research in the history of concepts would need to trace (for a similar methodological injunction in *Begriffsgeschichte* see Richter 1995: 44). As Skinner observed, concepts that a society possesses are predicated on the corresponding vocabulary with which these concepts could be discussed with consistency (Skinner 2002a: 160). Words are not the same as concepts that constitute the edifice of politics and political thought. But an arrangement of words that follows a loosely defined pattern would reflect a social and political status quo and a possession of concept by a particular society (Skinner 1989a: 8). For this simple reason, political action that goes beyond the bounds of what is acceptable, yet builds on a number of values

associated with the status quo, would require its advocates to rhetorically modify the linguistic conventions that regulate the application of concepts relevant to such an action. By the same token, isolating a corresponding conceptual change would hinge on a basic contrast of the past convention with what has established itself as a novelty, rather than an aberration, in the use of friendship in discourses of and about international politics.

To make a strong case for a change, that is, render it politically significant, studies in conceptual history start by reconstructing what was conventional in the first place. This book will guide a reader through a documented story about the alternative ways of using the concept and ‘doing things’ with friendship. In other words, it will demonstrate which conventional alternatives to a ‘moralised’ friendship had existed before they were side-lined and made incomprehensible in modernity. To this effect the book selects a number of examples ranging from classical to modern sources to show how exactly these distinct uses of friendship figured in political rhetoric and what difference they made.

For instance, to identify how exactly the term ‘*amicitia*’ was involved in a ‘contractual’ language game in diplomatic sources of the late medieval–early modern period, this study will scrutinise a range of associated words (i.e. verbs and adjectives) that were used across a body of various ‘treaties’ and pacts and thus were part of ‘contractual’ language. A detailed scrutiny of the vocabulary used by the parties in specific contexts would be prerequisite to establishing linguistic conventions in corresponding genres and tracing their incremental transformations over extended periods of time. It is on the grounds of identified regularities that contractual vocabulary of friendship will be isolated. The selection will thus be a matter of observation, rather than a preconception of what counts as contractual; hence, some expressions, such as ‘mutual’ or ‘constant friendship’, found in treaty texts and legal commentaries, which may seem to a modern reader as pertaining to an altogether different vocabulary, would be identified as a manifestation of friendship’s ‘contractual’ meaning. A reconstructed contractual convention will indicate how friendship performed a binding function in the absence of any established international regimes and courts. It is this convention that had to be modified, even if incrementally, for impersonalised actors, such as modern sovereign state and empire, to integrate it into the system of binding relations cemented by numerous friendships and further transform it into the rules of contemporary international society.

By no means do changes in vocabularies and rhetoric, which makes use of them, follow a uniform pattern in heterogeneous language games. As a newspaper columnist and an incumbent minister are likely to discuss budget cuts in different terms, likewise Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics*, Hugo Grotius’s *The Rights of War and Peace* and a corpus of early ‘international’ pacts used friendship according to the rules of language games that were not necessarily identical. Some of these games comprised histories and accounts of existing practices and

customs; others regulated ways to raise philosophical questions about the nature of genuine friendship and provided room for rhetorical responses; yet others, for example formal agreements, displayed stricter rules that only allowed customary copying of specific terms in recognisable statements. This has important implications for the patterns of use and dynamics of conceptual change: whereas some games allow for a conceptual change necessitated by a new philosophy or a trend in political thought, others display a more incremental trajectory of conceptual adaptation and modification. The latter is typical of diplomatic conventions in drafting ‘international’ agreements, which proved crucial for the history of contractual friendship. Due to a degree of inertia in legal customs and ‘regimes’ among nations, this domain conserved elements of conspicuously contractual friendship in the modern world.

Key to understanding different ‘international societies’, as well as the legitimacy and authority they ascribe to rules, is which of these games they recognise and whether these games can intertwine by occasionally building on the tropes and arguments of each other. Friendship is one such indicator of language games unfolding in modern European society and, by extension, global international society, showing how rules are negotiated, enacted and cemented. For instance, in early modern Europe it was possible to overtly negotiate the scope and subject of friendship – perhaps an unthinkable practice in contemporary friendships; it was equally legitimate to praise the virtues of a friend who had no interest in practical outcomes of the relationship; and, more importantly, on occasion actors could employ ‘ethical’, that is, extra-legal, arguments to cement the terms of an ‘international’ pact and exhort their counterparts to observe them. The interplay of these linguistic games gives us clues as to how polities ‘oblige’ others, why a friend should have ‘duties’, why we expect reciprocity in friendship, and the means of inaugurating binding ‘regimes’ and agreements in the formative junctures of international societies that may have lacked central authority to enforce ‘law’. The power of this clue is hard to overestimate should we only contrast juridical narratives of the sixteenth century – allegedly mediating a transition to a modern international society – , which recognised the utility of friendship-making in relations among polities, to the juridical arguments of the eighteenth century that lacked any such recognition and posited friendship as a product of nature and the natural foundation of society. The shift from one linguistic game to the other is ultimately a subject of conceptual history and international political theory. This is also the agenda that contextualist studies of concepts share with an IR constructivist literature stressing the role of rules in international politics (see Onuf 1989).

Genealogies and conceptual change

Contested concepts

Describing historical events and processes is the task commonly performed by historians. International political theory is interested in historical changes not for their own sake but for what these changes say about the present-day knowledge of international politics and the role of power in formation of such knowledge. Since the 1980s international political theory and political theory have developed and incorporated a range of methodological tools to analyse changes in language, both historically and politically. At the forefront of this research are variations of contextualism, including the history of concepts, and genealogy. These aim at critical re-evaluation of currently prevailing principles and values, and at creating room for re-consideration of marginalised alternatives. The aim is predicated on commitment to anti-whiggish and anti-teleological writing of history (for an opposition of ‘whiggism’ and ‘usable past’ see Kratochwil 2014). These approaches engage with the past by way of contextualisation and subsequent identification of the contingency of beliefs and ruptures in political traditions.

This book will practise a particular combination of the history of concepts and genealogy connected by the idea of rhetorical contestation. In doing so it will build on insights from genealogical research and Quentin Skinner’s methodological injunctions. As this is not a conventional technique in international political theory, a few explanations are due as to how the two combine and what difference it makes politically. The history of concepts, as a research programme, seeks to demonstrate what change in the meaning of concepts is about and how it can be political. Political theorists argue that the aim of the history of concepts is *par excellence* political (for an elaboration of this argument see Palonen 2002) in the sense that it demonstrates how the past might inform our own thinking or how concepts and institutions forged in past ideological battles might be constitutive of policies made in the present. In this way it reveals contingency of political beliefs and identifies alternatives that can help us reflect upon and reassess today’s prevailing social conventions and their normative agendas (ibid.: 103).

The factors of contingency and contestation in the use of political concepts can be assessed only by way of detailed scrutiny of the context in which these concepts are used. Placing concepts in context means that we show how they are used in specific documents and by particular authors. Such an exercise allows shifting one’s perspective on concepts from that of metaphysical units to one of practical tools helping to express the user’s views and opinion. This shift is instrumental to arriving at a basic understanding that all concepts are necessarily contested by their users either at the level of definitions or at the level of innovative application in political rhetoric.

As Skinner maintained, concepts and values are amenable to rhetorical re-description, thereby admitting no standard or stable meaning of a particular concept (Skinner 2002a: 182; Palonen 2003: 163). Thus, all claims about the contingency of concepts are not about 'mere' contingency, but imply a demonstration of alternatives formulated in the lexicon of their protagonists. It appears, then, that any concept held for whatever reason to be dominant is in fact a manifestation of its approval and acceptance by the relevant audience. This, however, does not eliminate the possibility of alternative ways of formulating and using the concept that may well have been in circulation in the same period and that, after retrieval, can tell us as much about the political context as the dominant account.

Skinner, an influential protagonist of this approach (see, for instance, Skinner 1989b), in his later essays adopted the term 'genealogy' to describe a type of history of concepts he is doing (Skinner 2009, 2012), but the task of such research he had already formulated in *Liberty before Liberalism* (1998). It consisted, he wrote, in recovering alternative 'perspectives' and bringing his reader to 'ruminate' what was recovered for her (Skinner 1998; for ways in which this task draws upon Weberian and Nietzschean thought see Palonen 2003: 25, 2005; Skinner 1999, 2006). Basically, Skinner expects his readers to do the thinking themselves when presented with unfamiliar past perspectives on a subject and account of conceptual change (Skinner 2002a: 88).

Effective history

Skinner's approach was questioned by a number of critics. One of the key criticisms concerns the problem of political relevance, for it is not always clear how exactly such a conceptual genealogy links past debates to present-day knowledge and politics. Skinner's original contribution to theory consisted in destabilising the existing teleological histories or traditions. It proved to be a blow to the pillars of contemporary theories with their teleological, self-legitimising interpretation of history. However, destabilisation by means of contextualising historical accounts does not always effectively engage contemporary debates. This is one of the reasons for some contemporary genealogists, who build on Nietzsche's observations, to see this result as unable to make any difference. For them, Nietzsche's genealogy must aim at radical 'debunking' of current beliefs, which Skinner's genealogy allegedly does not deliver (an argument put forward by Lane 2012).

Skinner himself admits that his studies are not meant to totally debunk a system of thought or morality, as was the aim of Nietzsche's *Genealogy of Morality*. Instead, it is the reader who should do her part of the job. Translating this debate into the question of relevance for the audience of political and international theorists means that genealogical research needs to make a clear connection between unsettling the past and contesting present-day knowledge. Thus, what needs to be emphasised is the task of writing what is called an 'effective

history', that is, history that engages present-day theories and ideologies. Being effective is a political dimension of the genealogical investigation into the history of friendship. The genealogical effect of this study will consist in equipping the reader with the means to render meaningful those friendships in world politics that seem incomprehensible, bizarre or insincere. It will also reopen contemporary debates privileging ethical, normative and emotional aspects of friendship by explicating the room for power and politics in friendship. It is for this reason that I take as a starting point the above-described contemporary discussions of international friendship and their classical authorities on the subject of friendship. Reconstructing a conceptual alternative in the past will eventually help us see how friendship was used politically in critical junctures in the history of the international system. Only in this sense can one claim that this genealogical approach delivers on the aim of debunking. And only this kind of relationship to the present makes a genealogical approach 'effective' in the Nietzschean and Foucauldian understanding of the term (Foucault 1991,2002; Saar 2008: 298).

One problem with a genealogical history of concepts is that making sense of past statements may run into the fallacy of presentism. Therefore, any attempt to examine present-day political arrangements by way of showing historical contingencies needs to address a problem of translation: the language games of past debates may not be comprehensible to contemporary audiences or may not speak directly to our problems. Although translating the observables into categories of analysis may help our comprehension, it may also unintentionally produce a presentist bias and cause misrepresentation of vital knowledge of the past (for the effects of such presentist bias see Bartelson 1995: 66–67; Richter 1995: 132). Insofar as we do not aim to reproduce historical texts in full and in original language, there is no unequivocal solution to the problem of presentism (for more on this problem as well as for its ingenious qualification as 'original sin' of historians see Syrjämäki 2011). Nevertheless, there are ways at least to mitigate the effects of such bias and keep the results 'falsifiable'. One of these ways is in recognition of 'perspectivism' rather than 'objectivism' of any research orientation (Max Weber was among the first to defend this principle in social sciences, see Weber 2004). Thus, the main aim of this study will consist in identifying a conceptual alternative that can help us make sense of political friendship. As such, this aim does not presuppose the recovery of the past context in full, and thus leaves the argument open for modification or even refutation. Similarly, this study is not about tailoring past concepts to present-day needs and adapting them to a teleological or continuist interpretation of history. Instead, it will recover only one of the possible perspectives and thus cannot claim to recover a full history of friendship among nations, which is way too broad a field geographically, chronologically and thematically to be covered in one book.

Furthermore, presently genealogy, similarly to the history of concepts, stands more for a research programme than for a philosophical task (Vucetic 2011).

By recognising an inextricable knot of power and knowledge (Foucault 2002) it works as a reminder of the fact that our interest in the past is driven by present-day concerns. Apart from this well-known self-exposition, it also holds commitment to identification of the strange and unknown, rather than a confirmation of tradition. Its ultimate task is to render strange the conventional. However, it is up to an author to determine what would be sufficient for achieving this task. Therefore, in its quest to question the currently prevalent ethical naturalistic perspective on friendship, this book seeks to uncover what used to be its powerful alternative, the loss of which, as will be demonstrated, was informed by the power struggle over the basic concepts of contemporary international society. If a crucial alternative, vital to the constitution of contemporary society, is identified in the scope of undertaking, then there is no need to exhaust the degrees of strangeness; that task could be left to further studies aiming to extend the horizons of our thinking.

Following this precept the study will unfold the current ideas of friendship back to their self-styled intellectual origins, that is, the ethical works of Aristotle and Cicero, situate these 'origins' within relevant contexts and language games by way of contrast to legal discourses and historical narratives, and then identify political choices and ideological principles that determined the selective use of classics in a historical juncture that is conventionally held as constitutive to modern international society. Thus, the periods examined in this study are nothing new for the textbook chronological canon of IR theory, as nearly every textbook identifies Thucydides, Niccolò Machiavelli and Thomas Hobbes as classical realist thinkers (Donnelly 2013: 34–36; Jackson and Sørensen 2010: 60–65; Lebow 2013: 60). A closer contextualist reading of these periods shows how selective existing canons are in focusing primarily on power, state and sovereignty for the purpose of increasing their own legitimacy, while overlooking potentially destabilising arguments, values and lexicon shared by the political agents of the past. Whereas Thucydides, Machiavelli and Hobbes are important figures in the conceptual history of friendship, the arguments they contribute to the relevant debates indicate how essential this concept was for understandings of 'power', 'sovereignty' and 'security' in the wider context of historical narratives and theorising of the law of nature and nations, as well as political philosophy. It is therefore critical even for realist thought to analyse classical arguments in context to see what was at stake in discussions of the phenomena in which it is primarily interested.

Furthermore, instead of a 'tradition' of thinking about friendship, in what follows the reader will encounter an analysis of contending visions and politically motivated conceptual choices. For this reason alone, it is critical for our investigation to start with a scrutiny of friendship uses in most popular classical works to be able to see which of the main *topoi* remained popular or in some demand among authors who we usually take as the founding fathers of modern

international thought. As the Renaissance and early modern thought were creatively appropriating Antiquity, it is instructive to single out basic conventional uses that classical sources made of friendship. Hence, the genealogies of phenomena such as friendship are often bound to start in the classical period to be able to explain the rupture, if any, with the modern world (cf. Skinner 2000a).

The type of genealogy and history of a concept I propose in this book combines intellectual history and diplomatic practice. Thus, it examines how friendship figures not only in historical and philosophical narratives but also in diplomatic pronouncements and in treaty texts. This is key to understanding whether the lenses of juridical and political theory lost the political practice of friendship from their focus, and, if so, when and how this might have happened. If one only traced the history of words back to Antiquity, the case of friendship would have displayed an astonishing and, perhaps, unmatched conceptual continuity stretching over two millennia. It would have looked like nations always used the corresponding term in diplomacy. Indeed, there was no period in recorded history when friendship was not used in politics among nations. The only thing that varied was the words expressing the term: a Greek *'philia'* in ancient Greece and medieval Byzantium, a Latin *'amicitia'* in Rome and throughout the Middle Ages in Europe, a French *'amitié'* in the period of Francophone diplomacy, and the English words *'amity'* and *'friendship'* in a later Anglo-Saxon diplomatic tradition. In addition, many other vernacular languages in the early modern period quickly supplied relevant diplomatic agencies with their own terms.

In what follows I will seek to reconstruct this practice with the aim to demonstrate a long diplomatic alternative to the philosophical reflection on the ethics of friendship. However, neither of the alternatives remained intact throughout the history of diplomacy. The use of friendship in intellectual reflection and diplomatic practice underwent many nuanced transformations, and looking at these helps us see to what ends friendship was used in different contexts. These ends could have been descriptive, normative, constitutive or contractual. Not all of these were captured in intellectual reflection. Thus, in order to properly reconstruct the conceptual alternative, I will scrutinise the main conventional ways of using friendship in the formative junctures of past and modern international societies. This scrutiny will contain specific examples of treaties, pacts and letters using friendship and its corresponding vocabulary. What will transpire from such scrutiny is an ensemble of distinct speech acts and terms performing unique functions in often-incongruent contexts, all of which make up a variety of forms that the alternative concept of friendship took in different regions and over time. Despite the multiplicity of forms and uses, many of them share a number of conventional elements that make them part of the same conceptual 'world'.

These elements include a range of negotiated subjects: local 'regulative regimes' regarding commerce, law and territory; the status of great powers and hierarchy; recognition of new members of international society. It will become

clear that continuity in the custom of using friendship in diplomacy is about the utility of friendship in constituting political forms and ‘regimes’ under the condition of international ‘anarchy’. At the same time, behind the curtains of continuity our analysis of diplomatic speech acts will demonstrate how the use of the term varies across contexts. Changes in diplomacy may be incremental and gradual, as diplomats have to refer to, and thereby reproduce and construct, ‘traditions’ and customs. This explains why certain diplomatic instruments are routinely borrowed with degrees of uniformity and survive through history. But it does not always explain the contingent circumstances in which the instruments are employed. By looking into such invocations we will identify the discrepant functions in the corresponding international orders that friendship was put to perform. It is from these functions, which diplomacy assigned to friendship in specific periods, that one could reconstruct its context-specific meaning. As a result of such exposition the history of friendship will reappear as a ‘discontinuous continuity’ reflecting changes in international societies themselves.

Rhetoric, continuity and change

Conceptual continuity can be part of intellectual reflection, too. Many disciplines are predicated on the construction and perpetuation of a ‘tradition’, which legitimises a certain system of teaching. Thus, Friedrich Kratochwil noted the importance of the past and ‘tradition’ in law, where knowledge of the past is ‘handed down’ to settle the problems of the contemporary world (Kratochwil 2014: 68–69). The thirst for political and disciplinary legitimacy will be in the spotlight of this study. Deliberate attempts to legitimise certain principles and rules require the use of rhetoric in context. As a result, conceptual continuity and change will be understood as products of rhetorical strategies employed either to maintain the status quo or bring about change. Looking at concepts as rhetorical tools will explain how the corresponding terms remained parts of conventional theoretical vocabulary but at a certain point in time ceased to capture the practice of contractual friendship in the analysis of international politics.

The point of change is a matter of central concern for any international and political theory. This study will inquire into the conceptual change that friendship underwent and explicate how this change may be constitutive to the foundations of modern international society. From the perspective of rhetorical use of concepts in particular disciplines (arguments, more often than not, are formulated polemically to refute opponents or earlier beliefs and use amplification techniques to persuade the audience), the genealogist’s task will be in identifying the contexts in which the use of the alternative concept of friendship was appropriate, and the arguments which managed to change its range of reference predominantly to ethics and normative discussion.

This book will identify one central period of rhetorical re-description in the early modern period that produced the currently prevailing normative

and 'naturalistic' perspective on friendship. Rhetorical analysis of this period will examine authorial arguments, their relevant contexts and language games before and after the conceptual change. It will do so in order to show how the new perspective related to and superseded previous concepts of friendship, and outline its effects on subsequent diplomatic, legal and political theory and practice. It will show in which works it was common to make use of friendship, how early modern authors (jurists, philosophers, poets, etc.) borrowed from the classical tradition and from which sources they typically borrowed, and why at some point it became expedient within the same fields to borrow arguments and examples from drastically different contexts and build normative rather than descriptive arguments.

Contextual and rhetorical analysis will indicate how the use of friendship was contingent on various factors, such as power positions in particular political settings and the entrepreneurial needs of merchant, colonial, state and other agencies. Depending on such circumstances, actors could choose which rhetorical strategy to deploy, which set of values to endorse and which terms to use. This amounts to a simple observation that in such heterogeneous circumstances values and concepts cannot be the same. Concepts are constantly rhetorically described and re-described, and thus can be interpreted with the help of classic rhetorical figures. One such figure is the *paradiastole*, which allows agents to substitute one thing for another within the range of reference of the same concept. Once such re-description is identified in a historical context, we may claim to have observed an instance of conceptual change (see Skinner 1996: 150–151; 2007: 163). However, to claim that a change in the use of a concept had taken place it is essential to demonstrate whether the innovative use became a convention, that is, was taken up as an authoritative and common use within a particular field or discipline. Therefore, the book will pay attention not only to an innovative use of concepts but also provide examples of what was conventional and how novelty gradually became a convention.

Rhetorical analysis allows for integrating power into the understanding of conceptual change. Political actors use concepts and arguments to defend certain values or a course of action which are often opposed by the parties maintaining alternative views. Thus, concepts that become prevailing and conventional, side-lined and marginalised, or re-described to refer to a different set of practices and values, are necessarily reflections of the changes in the political status quo indicating losses and victories in rhetorical battles. This study will thus attempt to connect specific uses of concepts with particular political outlooks, genres of argumentation and thematic contexts. Establishing this connection is necessary to identify political functions that both innovative and conventional statements, uses of concepts and doctrines may perform. Such a political rationality is not always self-evident, for things are often taken for granted or simply as a matter of custom which emerged in response to a concrete problem long ago and sub-

sequently solidified into routine practice. Reconstructing the alternative concept of friendship may help us see exactly this: the power positions and sets of values that we do not tend to notice or take as problematic due to the ‘naturalised’, ethical concept of friendship integrated into contemporary ideas about international society. However, in declaring this aim one final caveat is due: this study is not about the thought of particular authors and its development; rather, it concerns the history of arguments and uses of the concept to which those authors contributed.

Structure

In the first chapter I analyse a number of classical sources and their use of terms such as *philia* and *amicitia* expressing the concept of friendship. This analysis posits that ancient Greece, Rome and other Mediterranean powers possessed at least two concepts of friendship, which were used conventionally and legitimately. The first conventionally referred to a set of ethical relations binding together two or more individuals. This concept is familiar to modern audiences primarily from Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics* or Cicero’s *On Friendship*, and is a commonplace starting point for discussions of friendship in IR. The second, usually overlooked, captures political relations between members of the same political community, such as kings, cities and peoples. As such, the second concept could be free from the burden of ethical standards, and could refer solely to political relations marked by degrees of contingency and pragmatism. When such relations went wrong, the agents involved could well appeal to standards of ethical friendship in order to legitimise their present situation and future conduct. But in many more cases the second concept designated the establishment of political and legal order based on a political contract of friendship on specific terms. This contractual and contingent nature of political friendship was manifested in a number of classical works ranging from Thucydides to Titus Livy and the legal landmark of the sixth century, the *Digest of Justinian*. In fact, this concept was also identified in the *Nicomachean Ethics* as friendship of utility, but has been discarded by modern scholars as an inferior type of friendship. This chapter restores friendship of utility in its own right by identifying its conventional use and a range of political practices it helped to explain.

The second chapter plays a key role in recovering a perspective on contractual political friendship that was abandoned in the formative period of modern international politics. In contrast to the common critique of the instrumental use of friendship, this chapter outlines sixteenth- and seventeenth-century arguments that used the concept to portray actual power and legal relations. For the authors of these arguments, the use of friendship was not a matter of masking unjust social and political arrangements; rather, it was one of the concepts commonly used to describe ‘non-institutionalised’ – and on occasion ‘institutionalised’ –

political relations, which took a variety of forms. For them friendship was a contingent power resource that could be mobilised, negotiated, contracted and consequently breached. For this reason it was an inherently particular concept that could designate both equal and unequal distributions of obligations between partners. In this chapter I trace the incremental changes in the vocabulary of diplomatic documents, in both Latin and early vernacular versions, in order to identify contractual manifestations of friendship terms at the level of the grammar of 'international' politics. I demonstrate how deeply the concept was entrenched in the historical and juridical discourses of the period, and how authors of treatises used it conventionally to refer to certain types of treaty specifying a number of binding obligations concerning trade, alliances, neutrality and territorial integrity. In the absence of the institution of state sovereignty and developed international trade and navigation regimes, protracted legal debates highlight that agreements about friendship in the early modern period played an analogous role to these contemporary institutions. The residues of this institution and a degree of path dependency explain why the diplomatic practice of making formal friendship treaties or merely naming counterparts as friends still persists in the contemporary world. It is also this context that sheds light on our tendency to conflate, indeed for good reason, friendship with alliance or trade partnerships.

In the third chapter I show that Humanist authors of the early modern period indeed possessed at least two alternative concepts of friendship expressed using the same terms. The second concept – highly moralised and normative – was no less prominent in political and philosophical discourses, and no less important for the understanding of modern European international perspectives. Moralist discussions of political friendship and its defence of virtue indeed provide completely different perspectives, as they draw attention to the contradiction between duties of office and duties to a friend, problematic relations between ruler and ruled, and possible compromises of both power and friendship. More importantly, however, moralist discourses highlight the emerging set of values for the European 'republic' of commonwealths. Virtuous friendship was envisioned by a range of authors from Erasmus to English republican writers of the revolutionary period as a foundation of a proper international constitution. I also argue that Humanist authors first formulated a critical argument against princely friendship, for when contrasted with ideals of genuine and sincere friendship their friendship was often portrayed as feigned and detrimental to the good of the European 'republic'. Nonetheless, in early modern political thought the contractual concept and moralised normative concept of friendship co-existed, while their rules of application helped political agents to substitute one range of reference for the other when circumstances suggested such a rhetorical manoeuvre. This chapter also seeks to stress that the later conceptual change did not consist in a linear chronological replacement of the old contractual concept with a new one.

The fourth chapter is central to the argument of the book, as it analyses the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century debates that conditioned the change in the identified prevailing perspectives on friendship. It explores the reasons why the contractual and contingent concept of friendship disappeared from learned philosophical, juridical and political discourse. The main reason for this turn in conventional arguments about friendship can be found in the great debate regarding the natural condition of men and natural law, to which Thomas Hobbes, his followers and opponents were the key contributors. The debate spilled over into theories of natural law and the law of nations, where the identity of the concept of friendship needed to be established in relation to rival theories of the state of nature and the nature of man that in turn presupposed an alternative reasoning for the popular trope of the social contract and visions of the nature of sovereign power. The chapter surveys great works in the history of international law and moral political philosophy, and shows how friendship became the exclusive feature of the natural condition, and why the power of normative prescription for friendly conduct was derived from particular interpretations of nature and human sociability. Having been submitted to the authority of natural law and presented as a moral regulator for an emerging society of sovereign states, the concept of friendship, this chapter postulates, gradually disappeared from the range of conventional legal statements on international treaties. This century-long episode in juridico-philosophical debate had a profound effect on how generations of modern scholars tended to see friendship among nations – basically dividing them into two camps of ardent proponents and inveterate sceptics that prefer the ‘Hobbesian’ conception of international political culture.

The final chapter shows the consequences of such rhetorical conceptual re-description for our interpretations of the extensive use of friendship in modern and late modern diplomacy. I argue that the ‘naturalised’ and ‘moralised’ concept of friendship fails to grasp a vast domain of political relations that conditioned contemporary commercial relations, as well as the rise and consolidation of the colonial world. It is only in light of the contractual and contingent concept of friendship recovered in the first two chapters that we can comprehend an array of functions friendship performed in bringing about modern trade regimes, the British colonies and empire in North America and India, and last but not least the sovereignty of the newly created United States of America over native American tribes. More specifically, this chapter analyses collections of treaties from the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries, and traces how friendship agreements facilitated the launch of commercial relations and associated legal arrangements. Thus, I trace the relations of friendship to institutions of international law such as the Friendship, Commerce and Navigation Treaty and ‘most favoured nation’ status. In this chapter I also analyse how friendship agreements contributed to the colonisation processes in North America and India by

allowing first settlements, mediating ideas of political order, justifying relations of equality and inequality, and helping to seize territories from and affirming sovereignty over native tribes and local rulers *en masse*, thereby producing complex structures of imperial power.