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## Friendship as a Constitutive Element of International Order

This essay seeks to contribute to the current discussion of friendship in IR by drawing its attention to the ways states ‘speak’ of friendship. It attempts to divert the discussion from the normative accounts of a desired interstate conduct and analytical definitions of friendship and suggests to focus on the link between friendship and the functioning of international order. When addressing the issue of international order we mean practices of maintaining international system, its arrangement and patterns of interaction within its limits.

Among those few examples of thinking of friendship in international politics one could mention the work by Arnold Wolfers. His account of friendship presents an anthropomorphic interpretation of diplomatic relations. Wolfers suggests, however cautiously, that “close and effective interstate amity as among allies should tend to promote emotional friendship” (Wolfers, 1962: 33). Similar picture of international friendship was drawn by Alexander Wendt, who sees friendship as an ideal relationship under Kantian international political culture, an instance of which might be registered in western security communities (on security communities see Adler, Barnett, 1999). However, the conception of friendship between states portrayed by Wendt is to a large degree burdened with a contemporary romanticised ethics of individual friendship. This, quite naturally, can lead to a critique of certain collective security arrangements as impoverished or instrumental friendships (see Wendt, 1999: 298-9, 304-6). Drawing on securitisation approach, Andrea Oelsner has recently developed Wolfers’s propositions in regard to *regional* peace and cooperation which, presumably, deviates from the logic of relations at the level of the international *system* offered by realist (Oelsner, 2005).

There is, of course, a long tradition to make references to friends or allies in realist IR when depicting the structure of international politics and determining the principles of the state behaviour. For the representatives of this school of thought the terms “ally” and “friend”, which in this context seem to be synonyms, constitute one of the foundational pillars of international relations (see for example Burchill, 1996, Dunne and Schmidt, 2001, Forde, 1992, Morgenthau, 1960). Besides its close relation with the term “ally”, the concept of “friend” is frequently treated as an opposition to the term “enemy” which occupies one of the

key places in realist vocabulary. Even the classics of neorealism start with the question of who represents an “enemy” and who represents a “friend” and of the durability of this distinction in the situation of absence of an external authority (Waltz, 2000). This appears to be an analytical portrayal of international politics, which leaves out the analysis of concrete place and effects of friendship in international system.

In contrast this essay focuses precisely at the ways and contexts in which the concept of friendship was used by the states. It argues that not only friendship belongs to the domain of normative theorizing, but it is, first and foremost, one of the constitutive elements of the contemporary international system. It aims to highlight qualities of friendship that make it an inherent part of the political. Carl Schmitt has already vividly demonstrated the importance of friendship for the understanding of the “political” (Schmitt, 1996). Schmitt’s argument has a particular relevance for international politics given that the end of religious and civil wars in Europe, which was marked by the Treaty of Westphalia, signified the transfer of the “friend/enemy” distinction into conflicts among sovereign states. Later on, this logical dyad became the key principle in defining state foreign policy and the production of identities (Campbell, 1998; see also Farrands, 2001). In this essay we shall try to add some empirical observations to this line of thinking of friendship.

One should keep in mind that international friendship was elevated in the XX century to the level of universal international law (the key document which codified it is the *Declaration on Principles of International Law Concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States*, 1970). However, the widely spread practice of concluding treaties of friendship in a practical realm of politics, one indeed cannot identify much reflection on it in scholarly publications. Previous attempts to provide an empirical analysis of friendly relations among states and friendship treaties demonstrate certain limitations and fragmentary character (see Imam 1983, Maddux 1980, Rudin 1956). Their distinctive feature is that they focused exclusively on the USSR and presented its policies in a critical light. The discussion so far concerned mostly juridical obligations of the parties to friendship treaties and specific forms of those treaties. The nature of friendly relations was defined predominantly in terms of a “patron-client” formula under the circumstances of bipolarity; consequently, friendship received a very cynical image in this discussion. “Friendship” was claimed to present the act of military cooperation and political allying favorably. Thus, the usual skepticism implies that cynical politicians attach the label of friendship as a certain cover for their unattractive activities. Therefore, an old wisdom that friendship among states is merely impossible, brilliantly expressed by Edmund Burke, frequently finds support among observers.

This skepticism can be questioned by yet another sort of skepticism. The problem is that the first skeptical position presupposes a certain naivety of parties on whom the cynical holders of ‘great power’ role impose that ‘faked friendship’. Alternatively, one might argue that either one party is too weak politically or militarily to reject this imposition or it wittingly accepts this friendship to ‘exploit’ its patron afterwards. A skeptic might then wonder which audience is supposed to interpret, arguably faked, friendship compacts favorably. Obviously, their ethical side was devalued at least by the logic of bandwagoning during the Cold War. If one side considers friendships within the camp of the other as perverse, then apparently the utility of “friendship” in the outer world would be very limited. Still, both sides resorted to “friendship” on many occasions whereas having more straightforward and appropriate concepts for association at their disposal (e.g. ‘union’, ‘alliance’, ‘military help’).

The present study attempts to recover these theoretical and empirical deficiencies by examining textual representations of friendly relations among actors that used to belong to different ideological camps. The inclusion of practices of appealing to “friendship” from both camps might help us to get rid of certain bias against the Soviet type of friendship as inappropriate or deviating case and suspend the West/East divide on this matter (alternatively, it will result in the outlining the specificity of its deviation). Showing that friendship compacts is not an exclusively communist type of phenomenon may highlight its universality and make one wonder about other possible reasons for the use of the concept. The argument that this paper seeks to defend is that friendship is a practical tool for a political unit to position itself in international politics and to order an anarchic world. The latter function brings alternative to formal international regimes instruments into sight. It also allows seeing phenomena common for all international political cultures. The paper complements the general knowledge about the place of friendship in the foundational structure of the political by demonstrating its practical implications for state recognition, sovereignty and security.

Thus, we propose to examine the use of “friendship” in the treaties of friendship concluded by two major European powers with a strong imperial heritage, namely the United Kingdom and Russia (the assignee of the USSR), in the twentieth century. We shall set aside the explanation for the use of “friendship” by hidden motives (such as imposing weapons contracts) and look at what the texts themselves tell. We shall examine the surface of appearance of the concept at the superficial level of its immediacy. The main research focus is made on the use of the concept of “friendship” in the texts of international treaties (this includes the identification of: the subject of a treaty, the parties to it, particular expressions in which the concept appears, etc.). We also need to add that the study is not meant to be a

comparison in a strict methodological sense, it rather aims at contrasting certain textual patterns which, by definition, may allow for many variations in phrasing, references to unique events, etc. This contrast, nonetheless, may help us finding out the extent to which they differ and defining elements in the use of friendship that are determined by a particular ideological regime and practices that may constitute their common denominator. Thereby contemporary clichés and seeming deviations are supposed to be estranged and opened for a theoretical reappraisal.

## Common denominators

### a. Crisis and Order

Perhaps, the first thing that occurs to one when hearing the expression “the treaty of friendship” is a notorious Soviet collaboration with Eastern Europe and what used to be called the “Third world” countries. This is probably the first imaginary line that distinguishes the East from the West on the political map. After the end of the Cold War one might also assume that the practice is gone for good. This is, however, not so. Several recent examples of re-actualisation of “friendship” include bilateral friendship treaties between Russia and Kazakhstan (1992) and Ukraine (1997). Even the UK recognised the independence of Russian Federation by the treaty on the principles of relations in 1992 in which friendship was among the central ones. There is still a more prominent example of the use of “friendship” in Russian international treaties the effects of which are still evident in nowadays politics. Namely, we refer to the founding agreement of 1991 for the international organization known under the name “The Commonwealth of Independent States”. Its preamble states that parties believe it is expedient for their national interests to further strengthen the relations of friendship, good neighbourliness and mutually beneficial cooperation. In fact, every time one pronounces the word “Commonwealth” in this triad, the Russian equivalent for which is “Sodruzhestvo”, she may refer to international friendship. *Sodruzhestvo* may be read as ‘co-friendship’ or mutual friendship. *Druzhestvo*, the root word in *sodruzhestvo*, was one of the versions for saying ‘friendship’ in an old Russian style. This, of course, was not an invention made in a post-communist Russia. Therefore, in order to grasp a panoramic picture we need to examine the way we got there.

The Soviet Union definitely was not the only country concluding treaties of friendship in the twentieth century. The United Kingdom actively engaged in this practice either. The first step we suggest taking to compare the treaties concluded by the two ‘great powers’ is to list the countries with which they concluded those treaties. The UK concluded treaties, signed

agreements and exchanged notes relating to treaties of friendship with the following countries: Nicaragua (1905), Muscat (1920), Nepal (1923 and 1950), Saudi Arabia (1942), Libya (1953), Bahrain (1971), Qatar (1971), the United Arab Emirates (1971), Brunei (1979), Colombia (1980), Ireland (1985), Malta (1989), Russian Federation (1992), and Ukraine (1993). The list of Russian treaties of friendship appears to be somewhat longer: Turkey (1925), Italy (1933), Germany (1939), Finland (1948), Poland (1945), Romania (1948 and 1970), China (1950), Democratic People's Republic of Korea (1961), Czechoslovakia (1943), German Democratic Republic (1955 and 1964), Yemen (1964), Poland (1965), Mongolia (1966), Bulgaria (1967), Hungary (1967), Czechoslovakia (1970), India (1971), Egypt (1971), Iraq (1972), Angola (1976), San-Tome and Princiipi (1976), Mozambique (1977), Viet Nam (1978), Afghanistan (1978), Ethiopia (1978), Democratic Yemen (1979), Syrian Arab Republic (1980), Congo (1981), Cuba (1989), and Ukranian Soviet Socialist Republic (1990). There was also one multilateral treaty of friendship unknown under the name "The Warsaw Pact" (1955).\*\*

The first striking thing in these two lists is that they contain just two examples of treaties concluded with so-called 'great powers' (Germany and China, provided that one could refer to China as a 'great power' in the 1940s-50s), let alone 'superpowers'. Most of the actors come from Asia, Africa, Middle East and Eastern Europe. Many of them went through some kind of transformation of political order. In some cases it was the effect of decolonization (e.g. Middle East and Africa) in others it was related to the dramatic changes in political regimes (e.g. Asia) or to attempts to redraw the political map of Europe after WWII and the start of rivalry between the superpowers. Perhaps, the early Soviet friendship treaties are most indicative of the crisis component in them. The 1925 treaty with Turkey sought to establish '*firm and normal* relations and binding sincere friendship'. The 1933 treaty with Italy might be said to demonstrate a fear of aggression which is eliminated by agreeing on friendship and neutrality. Later the textual expressions of friendship reflected an extreme experience of WWII. For example, the first article of the 1943 friendship treaty with Czechoslovakia stated:

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This is the list of treaties registered with the UN Treaty series. The year after each subsequent country refers to the year of agreement, treaty or notes in the United Nations Treaty collection. All the treaties of friendship with the UK were acquired from the online UN Treaty series database: <http://untreaty.un.org/English/treaty.asp>

\*\* The year after each subsequent country refers to the year of agreement, treaty or notes in the official Soviet treaty collection "Sbornik deistvuyuschih dogovorov, soglashenii i konventsii, zaklyuchennyh SSSR s inostrannymi gosudrastvami" (*The collection of the treaties, agreements, and conventions in force concluded by the USSR with other states*). Moscow. Various publishing houses and years of publication. The exceptions to the rule are the treaty with Germany (1939) and the Warsaw Security Pact (available at the Avalon Project web site: <http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/>), and the treaties with Ukraine and China that were acquired from the UN Treaty series web site. We did not include in the study some repetitious and prolongation acts.

“High Contracting Parties, having agreed to *mutually unite* in the *permanent politics of friendship* and friendly postwar cooperation ...undertake to provide each other with military help and all kinds of support in the current *war* against Germany...”  
(translation and italics are mine – E.R.).

The first line of this treaty in fact reminds us of the title of Derrida’s book and probably would not stand his criticism that friendship sometimes implies extreme homogeneity. The ‘cementing’ power of the reminiscence of war in friendship remains salient long after the war itself ended. In the text of preamble to the 1970 treaty with Romania one can read:

“...originating from the strive to constantly develop and strengthen the relations of friendship between the Soviet and Romanian peoples, which are deeply rooted in the past, *cemented in the common struggle against Hitlerism* and elevated to the highest stage in the years of building socialism and communism...” (translation and italics are mine – E.R.)

Being a good indicator of the crisis role of friendship this example might equally well be placed into a further section on the specificity of the Soviet friendship. Nonetheless, an assemblage of these examples shows us that one of the preconditions for the re-actualization of friendship is some form of political crisis or drastic change in political situation. Friendship appears instrumental when an understandable order is to fill a political vacuum (that is, it must be established anew) or when this order needs to be redefined. Thus, it is not surprising that great powers did not conclude friendship treaties – they belonged to a well established European order based on old traditions of political conduct within the frames of the Westphalian system. The logic of bipolar system was also understandable for the actors and seemingly did not require friendship treaties to clarify the rules. It is only when the bipolar system collapses the UK signs friendship treaties with Russia and Ukraine, thereby socializing them into ‘European’ political order and its core political norms. For the most part friendship is used to establish order in relations of newly independent states with the rest of the world and great powers (or their former mother countries) in particular. Friendship facilitates the *recognition* of newly independent states (as sovereign actors) and their inclusion in legal order. The very fact that states enter in friendly relations signifies recognition of a political entity to have state quality and authority to establish positive relations with formally equal actors. The latter part implies the recognition of political authority to undertake international legal and political obligations.

Now let us consider the main political functions that friendship carried out in these treaties. These functions represent the common denominator in the use of friendship by both

countries. We shall argue that friendship is employed as a tool for asserting sovereignty and legal existence for newly independent states. It retains this role in the context of both British and Soviet foreign policies. To start with the British case, one may notice that treaties of friendship in the early twentieth century are engaged specifically in a scrupulous crafting of the place for the newcomers to a political and legal world order. The good example of this work, due to its representation of the old tradition, is the treaty with Nicaragua (1905), the first article of which endows the subjects of both parties with equal rights, liberties and immunities. It also provides for the *reciprocal* freedom of commerce and navigation (this includes equal duties and freedom to come into ports). Friendship was a typical bilateral instrument for the inclusion of a ‘young’ political entity into ‘civilized’ political and commercial conduct. This particularly applies to a “Friendship, Commerce and Navigation” type of treaties. The treaties with Nepal (1950) and Oman (1951) also contain clauses on mutually advantageous commercial relations, freedom of travel and navigation and equal rights for their nationals. Recognizing a capacity of a new political actor to be a party to political or commercial relations involves the questions of its capacity to provide law enforcement and act independently as a single body. This leads one to the link between friendship and state sovereignty that we shall outline below.

### **b. Sovereignty**

A more specific sphere where friendship provides a foundation for the realization of sovereignty is physical inter-state encounters and interactions at the state border. Establishing, maintaining and ensuring a proper order of contacts with the bordering states are functions constitutive of sovereignty. These functions apparently cannot be set to operate out of the blue, friendship appears to prepare and legitimize the basis for their introduction (as well as for a number of very specific relations). The treaty between the UK (which acted on behalf of the Sheikh of Kuwait) and Saudi Arabia (1942), apart from ritual appeals to ‘inviolable friendship’, contains concrete regulations and description of state policies (e.g. appointing special officers in the border adjacent territories) (Article 3). The purpose of those regulations was to eliminate the possible dangers for the security of the other thereby demonstrating one’s own sovereign capacity.

Another aspect of recognition is evident in what follows the proclamation of friendship in these treaties. The above-mentioned treaty of peace and friendship with Nepal starts with the standard expression “there shall be perpetual peace and friendship between...” (Article 1) which is followed by the general recognition of independence in the second article:

“The two Contracting Parties agree mutually to acknowledge and respect each other’s independence both external and internal”. Thus, state sovereignty is constituted by a friendly act of another state acknowledging the right for the other to realize its power independently in both dimensions. Treaties of friendship with Arabic states in the 1970s straightforwardly registered their sovereignty with an almost identical formula “considering that the State of X has resumed full responsibility as a sovereign and independent state” (see preambles of the treaties with Bahrain, 1971, Qatar, 1971, United Arab Emirates, 1971, Brunei Darussalam, 1979). An exchange of notes between the UK and the state of Bahrain preceding the treaty of 1971 was also meant to terminate the *dependant* role of the latter and resume its own realization of sovereignty. As the point 3 of the note reads, for the relations between two states to continue in “the spirit of close friendship and cooperation” they will sign the treaty of friendship. Besides the assertion or recognition of the sovereignty of the other in friendship, one can notice that the texts put a special emphasis on independency and a kind of symbolic distance between the parties in friendship. This is a point to bear in mind when we compare these treaties to Soviet textual formulas.

Assertion and recognition of sovereignty by means of various textual formulas is one of the main constituent parts of the Soviet treaties of friendship either. To start with, this type of treaties was of the utmost importance in the Soviet foreign affairs. The official collection of the Soviet treaties ascribes these documents (together with the establishment of diplomatic relations) to the primary category of international treaties. Surprisingly, even the Soviet friendship treaties contained a separate and typical, especially so after the WWII, clause postulating sovereignty of the parties. The typical article regarding sovereignty runs as follows:

The High Contracting Parties, proceeding from the full *equality, mutual respect for state sovereignty, non-interference* into internal affairs and high principles of socialist internationalism, implementing the principles of *mutual benefit* and *brotherly help*, shall further develop and strengthen the relations of friendship and close cooperation in all spheres.

This clause was included into most of the Soviet treaties. It was the case with DPRK, 1961 (art.4), GDR, 1964 (art.1), Mongolia, 1964 (art.1), Hungary, 1967 (art.1), to mention a few. One may of course point out an apparent contradiction between words and deeds in the context of Soviet foreign policies (e.g. J. A. S. Grenville (1975) underlined that all Soviet assurance about the respect of sovereignty lost any credibility with the invasion to Czechoslovakia). We, however, deliberately limit our focus to ‘words’, i.e. to the level of



texts and official rhetoric. The textual practices demonstrate a special emphasis being made on the sovereignty of the parties what might have helped to an easy dissolution of the socialist camp of states. Although, the assertion of sovereignty faced certain contradictions even at the level of treaty texts. For example, preamble of the 1955 treaty of friendship with the GDR postulates adherence to the principles of friendship and noninterference and article 1 contains a clause on the respect of sovereignty. At the same time, article 4 states that the Soviet troops will be temporarily stationed on the territory of the GDR which even at the textual level seems to contradict the idea of state sovereignty. There was a similar clause in the 1946 treaty with Mongolia. Nonetheless, most of the proclamations of friendship in the first articles of the Soviet treaties were accompanied by a firm affirmation of sovereignty. A curious exception to this observation is the 1948 treaty of friendship, cooperation and mutual help with Finland. Whereas other 1948 treaties (with Bulgaria, Hungary, Romania) combined postulations of friendship and assertions of sovereignty in one article, the treaty with Finland contained separate articles for postulation of friendship (art. 5) and for the respect of sovereignty, independence and noninterference (art. 6). Thus, even within the body of one friendship treaty there is an evident attempt to discriminate between ritual proclamations of friendship and ritual postulations of sovereignty. The attempt inevitably accentuates the theme of sovereignty in this particular friendship treaty as opposed to other documents where the amalgamation of friendship and sovereignty becomes habitual due to multiple repetitious acts. The USSR also took into consideration Finland's wish to stay away from the disputes between the 'great powers' and that was reflected in the treaty.

This way of asserting friendship and sovereignty became a type of political ritual in the post-WWII diplomatic practice. Examples from the pre-war period, on the other hand, resemble the themes of the local and the concrete articulated in the British practice. These treaties had accentuated prominent themes in friendship before they moved into invisible background. Particularly, we refer to the issues of borders and noninterference. One of the first friendship treaties with Turkey (1925), as well as many treaties from the 1930s, emphasizes the issue of non-aggression and non-interference. This also applies to the 1933 friendship and neutrality treaty with Italy which contained a specification of sovereignty (later specification of the notion became obsolete): the contracting parties expressed respect for inviolability of territories under the sovereignty of the other. Some friendship treaties with newly independent African states in the late 1970s put a special emphasis on the mutual respect of sovereignty over their natural resources, that is on more tangible and immediate things (see articles 2 and 7 of the treaties with Ethiopia (1978) and Syria (1980) accordingly).

A notorious 1939 boundary and friendship treaty with Germany (known as the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact) addressed precisely the issue of ‘establishing political order’. In this case friendship was involved in drawing political map anew and recognizing dotted lines signifying new states borders, even though the sovereignty of a Polish political entity was far from being respected. From this we can infer a rule (not in any strict sense) that respect for sovereignty provided by friendship compacts applies only to parties to friendship and does not extend to third parties. Similarly, a British friendship treaty with a newly emancipated Ukraine (1993) postulated respect for territorial integrity and the inviolability of frontiers.

This is also an occasion when bilateral and exclusionary nature of friendship becomes particularly evident. Thus, ‘great powers’ transferred (and confirmed) the foundational principles of the Westphalian system to the rest of the world by means of bilateral friendships. This, in fact, resembles the process that Westphalia underwent at its own foundational moment, when European sovereigns employed the concept of friendship in recognition and confirmation their own sovereignty (more on this thesis, as well as on the role of friendship in security on the eve of Westphalia, see Roshchin, 2006). Hence, it is hard to imagine this practice to correspond with an idea of common Kantian culture within the community of friends. The community itself is hardly possible because friendships are predominantly bilateral and exclusive. To highlight this aspect, we shall demonstrate a ‘contractual’ nature of friendship agreements.

### **c. Contractual Friendship**

Another aspect that these treaties highlight in international friendship is its contractual and necessarily mutually beneficial character. Some observers argued that the principal inequality of the parties (with the USSR holding a privileged position) was a distinctive feature of the Soviet friendship treaties (Maddux, 1980, see also Grenville (1975: 352-3) who suggested that Soviet treaties were merely appearances of equality). Others suggested that the Soviet Union unilaterally took upon itself greater obligations (military and economic) in exchange for the other party’s commitment not to enter anti-soviet alliances (Imam, 1983). These observations, however, cannot be inferred from the texts of friendship treaties themselves. As we have indicated above, reciprocity in legal obligations of the parties was emphasized in the British treaties. A similar tendency can be tracked down in the Soviet friendship treaties. Postulation of *mutual benefit* frequently accompanies an elevated rhetoric of brotherly help in the first articles of these treaties (see for example the treaties with GDR,

1964, Romania, 1970, and India, 1971). Earlier treaties are even more indicative in this respect. Let us quote the above-mentioned treaty with Turkey (1925):

“...acknowledging that it is in the interest of both Contracting Parties to define *precise conditions* facilitating the strengthening of firm and normal relations and binding *sincere friendship*...” (Translation is mine – E. R.)

Apparently, an attempt to figure out the conditions upon which the parties establish a particular type of relationship and a verbalized requirement for mutual benefits registered in the constitutive of the relationship treaty (or written contract) do not correspond to our shared idea of friendship subsisting between individuals. Neither does it correspond to the idea of sympathy and amity which, as A. Wolfers assumed, could possibly emerge in the course of close cooperation between states (Wolfers, 1962). It does not fit the image of Kantian political culture based on the idea of common good for a society of states. Friendship simply belongs to a different sort of phenomenon from that held by political theorists while depicting an abstract, analytical picture of international relations.

In contrast to an ideal or romanticized image, friendship plays a role of a special political contract or an instrument for the establishment of relations with a new political actor, who is recognized as a sovereign being in this contract. A friendly act or contract, for this matter, implies concrete conditions securing independence, full control of territory, establishment and recognition of borders. It is predominantly bilateral as it is local and concrete; therefore, it contradicts an idea of universal friendship cementing a ‘society of states’ as a politico-cultural unity. It is also in contradiction with our ‘code’ of friendship as it is manifestly contractual and allows for friendly relations in the fields science and technology or economy.

One could draw an analogy with a ‘marriage by contract’ on this issue. The fact that there is a contract does not mean, as we might suppose, that there is no love; love and sincere lust for marital union in turn do not preclude a contract. The same applies to political friendship. One might well argue in favor or against the possibility of friendship viewed through the lenses of ethics of individual relations (which is supported by brotherly rhetoric in official documents or rejected on the grounds that it is faked). Yet, if one privileges this approach, another side of the concept remains hidden from an analyst and, thus, leaves the phenomenon not explicated. A common understanding of friendship would have hard times accounting for a formal contract. Hence, there is an abundance of reproaches of political friendship as faked, distrustful, unreal and pragmatic. Therefore, a more adequate understanding of political friendship entails consideration of contractual relations at its

foundation. Contractual friendships, as the content of treaties demonstrates, have very concrete and pragmatic implications and this formalization and specification might constitute an invisible core of public friendship.

#### **d. Friendship and Security**

Thomas Maddux noticed that the Soviet treaties of friendship often contained the clauses on mutual help in provision of security, but this was usually a prelude to the creation of military alliances (Maddux, 1980). A. J. S. Grenville also pointed at the provision in the Soviet treaties according to which the signatories would not join alliances directed against each other (Grenville, 1975: 352). Indeed, the proclamations of security were another principal part of friendship treaties. This, however, was not an intrinsic feature of Soviet alliance building under conditions of bipolarity. British friendship treaties paid attention to security related issues as well. A common practice was to start the first article with the proclamation that “there shall be perpetual/permanent peace” (see British treaties with Saudi Arabia, 1942, Nepal, 1950). Other constitutive clauses included: settling differences/disputes in the spirit of peace and friendship; preventing of unlawful acts; and consulting together on matters of mutual concern (see treaties with Saudi Arabia, 1942, Bahrain, 1971, Brunei Darussalam, 1979). Besides these more or less concrete acts, friendship treaties pronounced a more general commitment to “the maintenance of international peace and security” (see treaties with Libya, 1953, Russian Federation, 1992).

As we already mentioned above, the theme of security and, particularly, non-aggression was most prominent in early Soviet treaties. In contrast to more recent appeals to universal values of peace and security, the earlier treaties addressed more immediate needs for survival mediated by friendship. The remnants of the fear of concrete danger are present in the post-WWII Soviet friendship treaties which sought to eliminate the threat of a possible German aggression (see for example the 1948 treaty with Bulgaria). The Soviet friendship treaties indeed differed from the British ones in adding a separate clause on abstention from joining any alliances that might threaten the security of the other party. Although, this was a clause characteristic more of the treaties with the countries that were not members of the Eastern block (e.g. treaties with India, 1971, Afghanistan, 1978, Yemen, 1980). In case of Warsaw Treaty Organization members, the parties promised to provide military help in case any of them suffers an aggression by a third party. As far as the clause on non-alignment is concerned, we shall argue that it was not a specific feature produced by a bipolar system or Soviet ideology. The Soviet Union inherited this practice from the western international

politics. The practice implemented with the help of friendship was most evident in the British imperial policies (for this thesis and a more general genealogy of friendship in international realm see Roshchin, 2007). We suggest that this clause is a rehabilitation of an ancient tradition of ordaining anarchical world of international politics in an understandable and predictable shape. Thus, friendship compacts represent attempts at definition and re-definition of players and their roles in world politics and of its dividing lines. A subscription to a certain interpretation of world politics or what Zafar Imam called a shared vision of problems by the parties (1983), thus, contributed to actors' own and overall security. The question, though, was not limited only to definitions and shared understandings, friendship also provided for constant consultations and cooperation in various spheres between the parties.

Here we would also like to question an interpretation of the Soviet Union being friendly towards neighboring states suggested by J.A.S. Grenville. He argued that "by friendly neighbours Stalin meant States which would be bound by political treaties to the Soviet alliance, whose military resources would be dominated by the Soviet Union and which would permit the stationing or entry of Soviet troops for mutual protection" and continued with the statement: "'Friendly' also meant that the economies of Russia's allies would more or less follow the communist pattern" (Grenville, 1975: 352). We will return to the second part of the thesis below. As far as the first part is concerned, we do not claim that Stalin did not pursue this or any similar goal. We would just like to suggest once again that this use of the concept of friendship was not specifically communist. Friendship with neighboring states and more specifically "friendship and good neighborliness" as a mode of political interaction originates in medieval and early modern Europe (I elaborate this thesis elsewhere, see Roshchin, 2006). What matters in this practice is that its utility increases when some crisis or political reordering is under way, which was obviously the case in the post-war Europe and when the USSR was about to dissolve, i.e. the time Russia concluded the treaty of friendship, good neighborliness and cooperation with Ukraine (1990). Thus, a more conscious attitude towards the interpretation of friendship solely as a tool for manipulating neighboring states by a Soviet superpower is required.

After WWII both British and Soviet friendship treaties seem to have become convenient fora for the proclamation of such universal values as international peace and security. This might be related to the creation of the United Nations as a universal political organization. Friendship treaties of the second half of the twentieth century frequently referred to the principles of the UN Charter when expressing their commitment to international peace. With the creation of this 'universal' body friendship treaties started shifting from expressing

concrete security concerns to proclamations of their general commitment to international peace (the Soviet Union on special occasions emphasized regional peace and security in Africa and Asia) and security, disarmament, peaceful coexistence and détente (see the Soviet treaties with India, 1971, Angola, 1976, Cuba, 1989). In later texts it became a certain cliché or political ritual whose persistence could be determined this time by the logic of bipolarity.

### Soviet peculiarities

There is in fact a certain specificity in the Soviet friendship treaties which originates from their distinct ideological background. To understand it better we would like to address the reader to the definition of friendship given in the Big Soviet Encyclopedia (1972). In the slot for the word “druzhba” (friendship) there is a subcategory referring to international friendship – “druzhba narodov” (friendship of peoples) which is defined as follows:

“Friendship of peoples is a comprehensive brotherly cooperation and mutual help of peoples and nations who chose a socialist way of progress. In multinational states it is one of the leading forces in the development of socialist societies; in relations among nations it represents the basis for the unity in struggle for peace and preservation of socialist achievements <...> The relations among peoples are determined predominantly by their socio-economic systems <...> A voluntary union of peoples in the USSR is a perfect example of friendship of peoples <...> Friendship of peoples is internationalism in action” (my translation – E.R.).

Indeed “friendship of peoples” was a key political rhetorical device in maintaining the ‘unity’ of the huge conglomerate of peoples called ‘the USSR’. It was praised in the famous line of the state anthem and codified in the 1977 Soviet Constitution. A special journal publishing the works of representatives of different peoples – *Druzhba Narodov* – was founded in 1939. The idea of international friendship was accompanied by a body of propagandistic literature including such titles as “Druzhba narodov” or “Druzhba, sotrudnichestvo, vzaimnaia pomoshch” (Friendship, cooperation, mutual help).

Surprisingly, it turned out to be of partial utility in the international field proper (that is in inter-state relations). As we shall demonstrate below it was actualized in the relations among units within an even greater conglomerate usually labeled as “soviet camp”. What is surprising is that rhetorical devices available to the constructors of the soviet ‘federation’

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We are aware of the difference that exists between the words “narod” and “natsia” in Russian, both words could be rendered into English with “nation” and “people”. We will however stick to rendering “narod” with “people” as this seems to better correspond to the nuances of the Soviet internationalist rhetoric.

became applicable to the inter-national field. In a way, the ‘inside’ swallowed the ‘outside’ in the course of the soviet internationalism. However, as we shall see, this transposition and inter-national field itself indicate how fragile and unstable the notion of ‘inside’ is as applied to the soviet federation.

First, let us demonstrate the traces that “druzhiba narodov”, as a separate rhetorical device, left on the body of international legislation. We deliberately used the word “partial” while characterizing the utility of the device in international realm above. This is because, despite its strong attachment to internationalist and socialist rhetoric, the Soviet Union still on many occasions adhered to traditional expressions of friendship as a relation between states as opposed to relations among peoples as separate political entities. An introduction of “druzhiba narodov” into international vocabulary marked the period after WWII when, as we mentioned above, there was a particular drive, according to our textual evidence, towards close unity. The common version of appearance of “druzhiba narodov” in international realm can be found in the majority of preambles to friendship treaties and it usually takes the form of “the parties (States or Countries) are confident that further strengthening of friendship and cooperation is the interests of their peoples” (see preambles of the treaties with PDRK, 1961, Angola, 1976). Another version, which is popular in the treaties with socialist states, places “druzhiba narodov” into passive objects of action. For example, the High Contracting Parties could undertake to further strengthen a firm and permanent friendship between peoples (see first articles of the treaties with Mongolia, 1966, Bulgaria, 1967, Czechoslovakia, 1970). Thus, peoples themselves have never been active subjects of international friendship as a metaphor of the friendly family of peoples would imply. Moreover, in correspondence to the 1933 Montevideo Convention on the rights and duties of states, the state remains to be the sole legal person which is entitled to conclude international treaties (constitutive of friendship). This is the first important limitation that the soviet internationalist rhetoric encountered.

The second concerns the degree of unity achieved in friendship by the states themselves. Soviet friendship treaties also aspired to strengthen an overall “sotsialisticheskoe sodruzhestvo” (socialist commonwealth/co-friendship). This is where the Soviet rhetoric departs farthest from the western practice. The treaties with socialist states are full of rhetorical devices asserting the values of socialist internationalism, brotherly help and friendship, strengthening of unity and solidarity, ‘cemented’ relations, and common ideology. The 1989 treaty of friendship with Cuba plainly states:

“...based on the existing relations of brotherly and inviolable friendship and solidarity, founded on the common ideology of Marxist-Leninist doctrine and

internationalism, as well as on the unity of goals in the building of socialism and communism...” (translation is mine – E.R.).

Other friendship treaties also proclaim a wide cooperation in various fields including economy, culture and science. It is interesting that this rhetoric of friendly and brotherly socialist unity in the case of relations with African and Asian countries is easily replaced with another sort of devices providing for political homogeneity and closeness of ties. Namely, friendship with those countries was grounded in the common attitudes towards colonialism, imperialism and racism (see the treaties with San-Tome and Princiipi, 1976, Mozambique, 1977, Ethiopia, 1978).

However, there is an inherent contradiction in this rhetoric of socialist friendship and homogenizing tendency. A British case helps us to keep a sober mind on this issue. A proclaimed closeness of friendship goes hand in hand with strong textual assertions of state sovereignty. As we have demonstrated above, assertion of sovereignty is a constituent part to most of friendship compacts and a Soviet friendship treaty in this respect is not an exception (it may be argued that in a way it is even dominated by the idea of state sovereignty). It does not really matter what type of doctrine regarding sovereignty (limited or unlimited) Soviet leaders held in their heads, what matters is that the unity contained in the idea of socialist commonwealth simultaneously brought about the disunity inherent in the notion of state sovereignty and, hence, it maintained the potentialities for political disruption and divide. It is no wonder that in the late 1980s *sotsialisticheskoe so-druzhestvo* turned into a roaring sea of sovereignties. The rhetorical devices needed for this transformation were already there, preserved by means of friendship compacts.

## Conclusion

Now we may draw some tentative conclusions from the textual analysis that we undertook above. As we could see from the rhetoric that surrounds friendship in international treaties, Soviet interpretation approaches the closest the idea of Kantian political culture based on friendship. Apparently, the ritualistic, ‘sincere’ and ‘true’ forms of friendship articulated in Soviet documents did not pass the test in the late 1980s when the community of countries united by the Warsaw/Friendship Pact ceased to exist. Yet, Russia, as well as the United Kingdom, continued to practice these speech acts in the early 1990s.

Thus, the contexts in which friendship treaties are usually invoked and the clauses they contain suggest that friendship is used as a certain contractual instrument. This



instrument, in turn, performs the function of recognition of state independence and sovereignty over a defined territory. Hence, it simultaneously serves as a diplomatic instrument for providing security on bilateral grounds. It is also crucial to underline that its constitutive role appears relevant during a crisis, declaration of the ‘beginnings’ and ritual confirmation of fragile political constructions, although an ideological affinity of the parties does not seem to be a necessary prerequisite.

Therefore, friendship as borrowed from the domain of interstate interaction would be an inappropriate tool for conceptualizing Kantian or an idealist political community. Neither does it suit the realist logic well. At least, the structural version of realism cannot account for the modes of use we described above. Classical accounts of state pragmatism, recognition of sovereignty and survival might do better, but there is still a dilemma captured by our ‘marriage by contract’ metaphor. Friendship indeed facilitates attempts at structuring an anarchic multitude. However, it does not necessarily correspond to the logic of bipolar world or great power balancing. The link between the logic of balancing and friendship might be clarified, though, in a separate genealogical study.

It is probably due to this logic of friendship the language of liberal democracies situated in the frames of a rather stable order is very technical and refers to more tangible things whereas when it encounters a non-western Other it tends to take on more ritualistic shape. The exposition of actual patterns of using the concept suggests that in contrast to presenting it as an ideal role for a ‘Kantian’ political culture, it seems more insightful to see it as a kind of boat bridge to the unpredictable Other which may easily be dismantled and constructed in a different place over the abyss dividing incompatible political forms of life. There is something in a special type of unity or being in ‘the politics of friendship’ that slips away when seen through the glasses of idealism or pragmatism and that we tried to grasp in this paper.

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