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FRIENDS, STRANGERS OR COUNTRYMEN? THE TIES BETWEEN CITIZENS AS COLLEAGUES.

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This paper addresses two related questions: what is the best way to envisage the relations between citizens of a state, and what ties or responsibilities does this entail? I argue that citizens are more like particular kinds of colleagues than like either friends, strangers, family-members, or countrymen, as have variously been proposed in recent years. I argue further that the specific interdependence of citizens entails special ties between them distinct from those between co-nationals who share a common culture or identity. This implies commitments more substantial than liberal advocates of constitutional patriotism recommend, though less than nationalists and some communitarians assume. Founded on interdependence in practices rather than common values or identity, these obligations have less radically exclusive implications.[1]

Two points need initial clarification. First, I take it that special obligations to fellow citizens are distinct from political obligation narrowly understood as the duty to obey law and state authority (Parekh, 1993). Second, my argument assumes a distinction between citizens and co-nationals, two categories often subsumed under the term compatriot.

These issues gain in importance from the current popularity of the language of community in politics, and from the attention political philosophers have recently paid to the specific claims of nationality, reflecting a still-growing emphasis in politics on national identity as prior to and definitive of citizenship. The revival of civic republican thinking suggests a more substantial notion of citizenship itself. Special obligations between citizens have been asserted in all these contexts, giving rise to tensions between universalist and particularist moral claims. While

some argue that a commitment to one's own community is essential to sustain political life, others fear that the special claims and obligations entailed further jeopardise the prospects of the more distant poor and oppressed in a world subject simultaneously to globalising and fragmenting forces.

In the first section I discuss a variety of analogies that can be applied to citizen relations. I then consider the characteristics of colleagues, their mutual obligations, and the degree to which these may be extended beyond the bounds of the local group (II). I next apply this analogy to citizens, and argue that this relationship similarly justifies certain special obligations, which may also be extensible (III). In section IV I argue that such obligations are better grounded and more justifiable than those of nationality, and suggest that there may be valid associative political obligations.

I: Community or association?

It is often assumed that we must see a political entity as either a close-knit community of those who share essential identities or beliefs, or, on the other hand, as a looser association of people agreeing on procedures or institutions. Powerful metaphors have been invoked in recent debates. Specifically the analogies of family or friends are often juxtaposed to that of strangers. The problems of fitting modern plural societies into the constraints of the models of community that come readily to mind - various dimensions of family - fraternity, sisterhood and mothering, religious belief, cultural identity or friendship lead many to insist that citizens are more appropriately understood as strangers linked by agreement on procedures or institutions.

But this polarisation can be criticised at two levels. First, more generally, it is not clear that all relations must fall into one of two broad types - even a family includes several kinds. Relationships can be characterised on many dimensions; distance, similarity, mutual feeling and knowledge are just some of these. Such a polarisation is misleading, even if those who invoke it are trying to reach a synthesis (Dietz, 1998). Rather than trying to resolve antinomies of *gemeinschaft* or *gesellschaft*, enterprise or civil association, particular or universal legal status, we would do better to consider how many relationships are not simply defined by a matrix generated by one or two polarities.

Secondly, and more concretely, models - *both* of community and of an association of strangers - are in most cases neither realistic nor desirable for politics. Most community models presuppose intimacy or shared values between members, which cannot easily be extended to the large and diverse populations of modern states. Moreover, many models of community are inherently hierarchical. If we try to realise them in politics, the results tend to be exclusive and oppressive. Furthermore they tend to confine the range of those we consider ourselves as owing significant obligations, limiting them to people whom we can know intimately or feel strongly attached to.

To look at some of these in a little more detail: family relationships, whether seen as genetic or institutional in nature, presuppose small groups in face-to-face relations, characterised by intimate knowledge and deep emotional bonds. Moreover, even if not patriarchal, they are to some degree at least hierarchical. Fraternity, the republican ideal of egalitarian brotherhood, assumes a shared substantive good (which, historically at least, depended on excluding women (e.g. Pateman, 1988, Young, 1990)). Sisterhood has equally been shown to mask differences

among women. Motherly care, also proposed as the basis of community, is not always separable from control or self-abnegation. Even if more equal relations of fraternity, sisterhood or motherly care can be envisaged, the intimate knowledge and emotional commitment of the family can still not be directly reproduced at the level of a whole society.[2]

Friendship, understood in the modern sense of a voluntary personal relationship valued mainly for its own sake, while inherently more equal than family relationships, is necessarily limited to a few people, as it too depends on intimate knowledge and emotional bonds. To the extent that it is a voluntary, if gradually established, relationship it is not analogous to citizenship. The notion of civic friendship based on Aristotle's very different account of friendship is more suggestive, but needs adjustment to translate into a world of plural values.[3]

Nationality is another model of political community currently advanced; this involves loyalty to a larger-scale community of countrymen or co-nationals, who share not necessarily ethnicity, but pre-political cultural identity or beliefs. As Miller puts it,

> the aim is that every citizen should think of himself as sharing a national identity with the others, where ... this means belonging to a community that is constituted by shared belief and mutual commitment, that extends over historical time, that acts collectively as its members determine, that has an identifiable homeland and that possesses a distinct public culture that marks it off from its neighbours (Miller, 1995, p.188).

This implies that political units can be made up of like-minded people in a continuous territory; otherwise this kind of community threatens to be oppressive to those who hold different beliefs.

These models of close community have an effect also on the range and strength of obligations

which people recognise. Citing the relations of nationality (and other close-knit but non-extensible models of community), as grounds for special obligations may serve to weaken differently grounded obligations to others.

Accordingly, taking it to be impractical or dangerous to take models of politics based on feelings of community, others insist that relations between citizens should be thought of as between *strangers*. Citizens are linked neither by genetic make-up, cultural beliefs, intimate knowledge nor sentimental attachment, but by agreement on a set of principles of justice, constitution or institutions; they are committed to *these*, rather than to their fellow citizens. For example,

> to treat someone justly is not the same as to care for someone, and in a morally pluralist society there will be many people to whom we owe the duties of justice but for whom we will lack more than a minimal sense of attachment. ...[T]hose whose commitments are very different from our own will always be strangers to us (Moon, 1993, p.161).

I.M. Young likewise argues: 'Politics must be understood as a relationship between strangers who do not understand one another in a subjective and immediate sense, relating across time and distance' (Young, 1990, p.234).

While this may effectively remind us that states and communities - even of the larger scale of a nation - will rarely coincide, and that we should treat justly and civilly those whom we neither know nor have feeling for, it gives rise to its own problems. Firstly, it underestimates the degree of connectedness between fellow-citizens in modern states, where people live in relatively enduring, multiply interdependent relationships. 'While we may each lack a name on the street of a big city, that namelessness is quite consistent with being well known in a range of

the interlocking circles that fill the space of the modern world' (Pettit, 1997, p.228). Once encountered, moreover, someone cannot remain a stranger indefinitely; treating them justly requires their becoming something closer or more distant. It also seems implausible that citizens may be effectively bound together by only a vertical commitment to principles or institutions.

Secondly, the analogy of stranger is not only unrealistic, but also has undesirable implications. For it too (though in a different way from family analogies) operates to limit the sense of responsibility or obligations we recognise. Calling someone a stranger normally acts to minimise (though not to nullify) their claims on us. Except in certain cases, we owe them very little in the way of communication, concern or trust, though we should not harm them, should treat them civilly and tolerate their differences.[4]

Thus the analogy of strangers, while not necessarily oppressive or exclusive, exaggerates the distance between citizens, and the notion of civility, as usually understood, implicitly limits the direct obligations of citizens to one another.

We might conclude that citizen relations are unique, and that we should resist all analogies. It is true that analogical reasoning proves nothing conclusively and cannot supply principles to determine the validity of any particular point of comparison. It cannot be assumed that similarities in certain respects imply similarity overall, so analogies must be scrutinised for relevance and non-redundance. However, analogical reasoning forms a part of most thinking processes, and is intended here not as an alternative to, but as a step towards constructive theorising. On difficult questions where conceptual analysis or constructive theory are not

making progress, an analogy with a more familiar or less contested example can advance our thinking by opening up new lines of inquiry. In political and social debates where agreement on more fundamental principles is absent, analogical reasoning can develop middle range principles and permit evolution in moral perspectives when more radical conceptual change is not possible (Barry, 1975, pp.86-102; Putnam, 1988, pp.73-75: Sunstein, 1993, pp.741-791).

Secondly and more specifically it may be argued that citizenship is unique and will not be illuminated through analogy with other relationships 'Democratic citizenship is a practice unlike any other; it has a distinctive set of relations, virtues and principles all its own' (Dietz, 1992, p.75). Yet these are not transparent or universally agreed; citizenship is now widely seen as under considerable practical and theoretical stress. In this context the opposed concrete images of family and stranger readily come to mind, and exert a powerful influence on thinking about relationships and corresponding obligations. However, in the current polarised debates on citizenship analogical reasoning is not only pervasive, but can help us to move beyond an apparent impasse. Where the concept of citizenship is contested among advocates of thinner and thicker conceptions, of legal status and political activity, conceptual analysis runs aground. Here the more familiar, more concrete and less contested relationship of colleagues can open up new lines of development.

It is on this basis that I propose colleagues as a more fruitful parallel for citizens. While others have invoked the metaphor before now, they have not clearly distinguished colleagues from other 'associative' relations.[5] The relations of colleagues resemble neither a close-knit community nor an association of strangers. Like citizens, they are based on involuntary interdependence, which distinguishes them from friends or associates; and they are marked by

degrees of equality, difference and relative distance, which distinguish them from family and other close-knit communities. While the analogies of family, friend, countryman and stranger make it difficult to justify obligations deeper than civility to people beyond local groups of those who share a pre-political identity, that of colleagues entails significant special obligations owed to diverse others, and also capable of extension beyond their initial limits.

II: Colleagues and their obligations

People readily identify as colleagues others with whom they interact on a more or less even footing within the framework of work places, companies, unions, and other institutions from string quartets to building sites. As the relationship of colleagues has been less studied recently than others including citizenship, its dimensions require theoretical unpacking, but it is a relationship that is familiar, concrete and substantial in everyday life. I will define colleagues as people *involuntarily* related through their work or projects, and *interdependent* roughly as *equal*s in a practice or institution. (It may be worth noting that the word derives from the passive form of the Latin *collegere*, to choose together; colleagues - such as consuls or cardinals - were those appointed to office together, rather than those in league, or joined together).[6]

If we examine the familiar relationship of colleagues certain core characteristics can be identified. People become colleagues by taking up employment in a workplace, occupation, official position, or entering a profession or discipline. While they may have varying degrees of choice in taking jobs or following a career, nonetheless colleagues do not generally choose one another in this process; they just find themselves together. In this sense it is an involuntarily assumed relationship, although it can be left (with varying degrees of difficulty) with a change

in job or official position.

Not all present in an institution are mutual colleagues, but only those who meet more or less as equals. Anyone promoted too far above the rest ceases to be a colleague; bosses, foremen, employees and pupils are in different categories of relationship.[7] Clearly many other kinds of relationship from command to friendship exist in workplaces and other institutions, as in families.

Unlike neighbours, colleagues are not defined by mere proximity, but by structural roles; their interactions may be more or less immediate.[8] Within their roles they retain a considerable degree of separateness. The organisation, institution or discipline frames their interaction and determines salient reference points, but they are not related primarily by their loyalty to the institution or its shared goals. Colleagues (as distinct from collaborators) are not to be understood as people united in pursuit of a shared project. To begin with, colleagues often find their solidarity in their vulnerability to the leadership or management, and their relationship develops through the practice. Secondly, the goals of the institution are often rather diffuse, and variously interpreted by different people.[9] The equality and connectedness of colleagues is compatible with significant differences between them. In modern workplaces diversity of religious and political beliefs, cultural identity and lifestyle is generally taken for granted. People regularly disagree about the everyday running of affairs, institutional policy and even the future direction of the practice or discipline without ceasing to be colleagues. Conflict on these matters is a normal part of their life.

No deep emotional bond is entailed; people may or may not personally like their colleagues.

They may not come to know them particularly well. So they are clearly distinct from friends. Yet this relationship is characteristically a relatively enduring one in which people develop through their careers. In any case, subject to the framing institution, colleagues share common concerns and are subject to similar dangers. If the product or discipline goes out of favour, if the industry is to be privatised or restructured, all are threatened (though they do not necessarily stand or fall together). There are salient issues and concerns that make them interdependent even if they disagree about how to interpret or deal with them.

While 'colleague' may be a somewhat more interpretative and normative term than some relations, this is more a matter of degree than of kind. It may not be wholly clear-cut what it is to be, or who counts as, a colleague, but a look at the office telephone book, for example, gives a near approximation. 'Friend', 'stranger' and 'compatriot' are even more strongly interpretative and normative. All these terms have developed in the context of particular historical practices. The interpretation and normative implications of such 'natural' relations as father, mother, brother and sister also vary between cultures. While not universally recognised across all cultures, the relationship of colleagues is deeply rooted in our society, expanding historically from primarily political and ecclesiastical origins to broader work practices and institutions larger than and separate from family and domestic spheres. Not all kinds of work practice generate or support such mutual relationships of some commitment, it is true; people engaged in extremely temporary, demeaning and insecure work are less likely to regard other workers as colleagues. Nonetheless, some of the most striking patterns of colleague relations and commitment emerged among those who worked together in coalmines and in trench warfare. In contemporary society there are two contrary tendencies; on the one hand, unemployment, casualisation in various forms, and competitive pressures limit or strain colleague relationships;

on the other hand, modern 'flat' management styles and the expansion of certain kinds of white-collar jobs in services and information technology may favour their development. The relationship is one that is as widespread in modern workplaces as those of marketplace exchanges such as employer and employee, customer and client that have received more attention in recent years.

The commitment of colleagues in its weakest form derives from their mutual vulnerability in the institution or practice, in its stronger forms from the value they attach to the relationship. Except in very adverse conditions, relationships of colleagues are valued in themselves, rather than simply as a means to institutional or individual career goals. Thus people frequently acknowledge 'supportive colleagues', even if these relationships are not as central as those of friends and family, nor the goals of the practice those most central to their lives.

Special obligations to colleagues

In practice people widely recognise special obligations to colleagues that go beyond what is owed to strangers. Equally, people expect from colleagues more than the adherence to rules and civility acceptable from strangers, but less than they expect of friends or family. We become more acutely aware of the obligations and responsibilities attached to being a colleague in instances where they are unfulfilled. For instance, someone who is polite but distant, or tolerant but unconcerned, or who consistently acts without consulting others, fails to meet these expectations. You do not cease to be a colleague (as you may cease to be a friend) by neglecting these obligations; you become an unsatisfactory or 'so-called colleague'. Thus, even if we do not always live up to the ideal of collegiality we implicitly recognise it.

These special obligations are not understood as self-assumed, but are involuntarily acquired with a job or position. But 'collegiality' is a matter of commitment to colleagues interacting more as less as equals, rather than loyalty to the institution. It goes beyond the terms of our contracts or civility, and extends to people we never know intimately, feel any strong emotion for, or indeed may even dislike.[10]

What is expected of colleagues falls into three main categories: *communication*, *consideration* and *trust*. Thus it includes honesty, informing others about common affairs, consulting them on decisions affecting them, discussing matters likely to elicit different viewpoints, and supporting others in their interaction with the management and wider institution. At a more personal level, it requires showing consideration and concern, being aware of others' difficulties, and offering a range of support from listening and advising on work-related problems, to more active help in cases of illness or family crisis. Finally, colleagues show a higher level of trust (and expect a higher level of trustworthiness) to each other than to strangers. They may lend books and tools, circulate papers, seek and give credence to references, in confidence that the book will be returned, the material not plagiarised, and the report reasonably reliable. This is not a matter of each one's establishing a personal track record. For such trust is extended to people who have never met. For instance, people often feel a responsibility to help new colleagues find accommodation and negotiate the bureaucracy.

While these obligations are not precisely specifiable, and vary between types of work, and from place to place (as is true of obligations to family and friends), they nonetheless can be delineated generally, and are experienced as real and as distinct from the civility people think they owe to strangers. While partly reciprocal, they do not necessarily require the same actions (or even the

same idea of what collegiality demands) from everyone. They are different for people in different stages of their careers - older colleagues may be expected to introduce new ones to the system and encourage their development, younger ones to be sensitive to existing practices, and to invest time in learning how the institution functions. Research suggests that women and men relate differently as colleagues, but if not hierarchical, such differences can be constructive. (Tannen, 1996). Hierarchies and inequalities of power attenuate obligations, and extended beyond a certain point they dissolve the colleague relationship itself.

These obligations are different from those owed to family or friends. To begin with, they do not require the same degree of social interaction as with family and friends - for example, inviting others to weddings, taking holidays together, or sharing their deepest hopes, joys and fears. Far from requiring us to develop personal attachments, they do not even require avoiding conflict. Many of the obligations and responsibilities to colleagues we recognise are not a function of the person or their particular characteristics, unlike those of friendship or family.

In exploring these special obligations I take certain features of our moral experience as a starting point; this is not to say that such intuitions are sacrosanct, and that we have to accept uncritically whatever practices or norms prevail in a society, but to show the contexts in which people recognise and honour obligations arising from relationships. Some but not all relationships give rise to valid special obligations. Destructive loyalties can develop in institutions as well as positive ones. Here I follow Raz and Scheffler, who distinguish relationships which there are reasons to value from relations which people may in practice value; only the former generate valid special obligations (Raz, 1989, p.19; Scheffler, 1997). Any particular relationship, and the interpretation of the obligations arising from it can be subjected to critical reflection, and these

may be limited or overridden by other considerations. They do not entail a generalised loyalty giving priority to colleagues in every domain, and irrespective of all other considerations. 'Special responsibilities need to be set within the context of our overall moral outlook and constrained in suitable ways by other pertinent values' (Scheffler, 1997, p.207). Associates in morally questionable practices such as concentration camp guards or mafiosi may incur no obligations of this kind. However, even in a company that has become corrupt, colleagues finding themselves in a common predicament may have obligations to one another that are independent of any commitment to the framing institution. In other cases *prima facie* special obligations of colleagues may be limited by considerations of justice or more pressing commitments. For instance we may recognise that members of a police force have special obligations of communication, consideration and trust to one another without thereby justifying their concealing corruption or giving false evidence out of loyalty to colleagues. A teacher's obligation to a colleague may be overridden by the needs of a student.

Extensibility of colleague obligations

Colleagues are not a rigidly bounded group, but expand in widening circles. While its primary referents for an academic may be the members of my department, it can extend to other departments in the university, to Politics departments in Ireland, Britain, and further afield to those engaged in the discipline of political science world-wide, as networks of relationships arise between more distant colleagues. The same is true for teachers at all levels, doctors, nurses, journalists, musicians, lawyers and trade unionists, for example. While there are significant boundaries, and different degrees of relationships and strengths of obligations, it is realistic to speak of colleagues at all these levels, even if many relationships are more latent than actual. For instance, we extend a high degree of trust in accepting references from people we

have never met, or even never heard of, and in facilitating visitors with quite remote connections.

Honouring these kinds of obligations can be motivated by a reflective recognition of interdependence, and does not require sentimental attachment. To be effective, then, the relationships of colleagues, unlike friends or family, do not have to be limited to the small number of people we can be linked to by intimate knowledge or strong emotional bonds. Nor is it limited to those who share certain deep beliefs or culture. Extending the range of 'colleague' does not necessarily dilute it beyond a point where it ceases to have meaning.

Finally, the relationship, while clearly excluding many non-colleagues, does not depend intrinsically on an opposition to a clearly defined out-group (whatever institutional rivalries may spring to mind on reading this), but on the interdependence of the members in the practice, institution or occupation. While the strength of commitment may often depend on the existence of difficulties and perceived threats, this is not essential to constitute a group of colleagues with mutual obligations. It is clearly possible to belong to, and feel responsible to, more than one circle of colleagues - to be a nurse and a trade unionist, for example, or an economist and a civil servant. A person can acquire multiple, continuing sets of colleagues through their career, in moving, say, from teaching to public service to journalism.

Colleagues thus provide us with an example of a relationship that is primarily non-voluntary and founded on interdependence in a practice or institution, within which people are of relatively equal standing. Even though they may not have common beliefs, feelings or intimate knowledge, they share common concerns and develop valuable relationships with special

obligations of communication, consideration and trust. These are not intrinsically limited to a small group but can extend to wider circles of people.

Though valuable, this cannot be the model for all relationships; a full life needs other, deeper commitments. 'You did have friends?' asks Oscar Wilde in Stoppard's play, *The Invention of Love;* to which A.E. Housman can reply only, 'I had colleagues' (Stoppard, 1997, p.94).

III: Citizens as Colleagues

In this section I argue that citizens and their mutual obligations can fruitfully be considered on the analogy with those of colleagues outlined above. The concrete example of such relationships shows that it is feasible for people with different fundamental beliefs or culture to recognise substantial obligations to each other; so that citizenship may need neither to be limited to thin affiliations nor to be based on stronger pre-political identities. Resting on interdependence, citizen relations can be extended more widely than family or nationality models suggest.

Like colleagues, the relationship between citizens comes about in a non-voluntary manner. Citizens who are interdependent in multiple practices framed by the state, and who are significantly equal though different, have special obligations to one another that are not self-assumed and are not reducible to observing laws or loyalty to the state. Citizens have obligations to others they may never know well, feel emotionally attached to, or even meet.

Citizens, minimally people who are members of the same state, do not in general choose one

another but are thrown together by the fact of birth or living within the same political boundaries. As Young puts it, 'a polity consists of people who must live together, who are stuck with one another' (Young, 1996, p. 126). They are subject to the jurisdiction of a common sovereign authority, which frames their interactions; thus they share at least common concerns and a common fate. To the degree that the government is accountable to them, they share a chance of determining their collective future, and a corresponding responsibility for the actions of the polity.

The relations between citizens are framed by an encompassing state; but this is not just a matter of proximity. Those who live nearby but are divided by state borders may (like neighbours in modern societies) have few patterns of interaction. The way the state frames the practices relating citizens may take at least two relevant forms; in both a liberal democratic, more instrumental account and a more substantial republican account citizens are related like colleagues, though to different degrees. In both, I argue, they are related more closely than strangers who happen to share institutions or principles. (In more autocratic forms of state too, relations between citizens are framed by the state for good or ill; citizens may form a community of concern and fate, but are barely distinct from resident aliens. As this raises other issues, I here confine myself to considering these two cases.)[11]

The state shapes patterns of interdependence and actions in such a way as to make citizens like colleagues. Despite progressive globalisation of the economy and culture, and changing notions and practices of state sovereignty, the state contains and structures a multitude of practices more effectively than nationality. The importance of different systems of taxation, education, and health provision are particularly clear examples of this effect. The differential experience of

East and West Germans up to 1990 provides a good example. Even in the case of Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, where the border has been more permeable to movement and media, where one state has been deeply divided and many nationalists in Northern Ireland have felt strong affinities with the South, the existence of different states has strongly determined the bounds of interaction in practices (Whyte, 1983, pp.300-315).

In typical liberal democracies the operation of a sovereign authority within borders contains and reinforces many overlapping and interlocking practices between citizens, even if politics itself is not understood as a practice, and citizenship is understood fairly instrumentally. To a great extent this is a *de facto* interdependence, of multiply reinforced relationships, rather than the relation of citizenship *per se*. However, to the extent that government is accountable to citizens, they are collectively responsible for the development of their society, and their citizenship is not just correlated to interdependence, or mutual vulnerability. Thus their relations move further along the spectrum towards the second, republican form of citizenship.

In a civic republican account of politics and citizenship, politics itself is understood as a practice through which citizens actively participate in their own self-rule, and achieve a degree of collective freedom. Citizens are interdependent through the practice of politics. This is not simply a co-operative structure that produces benefits, but a relationship that comes to be valued for itself. 'Citizenship has intrinsic value, because in virtue of being a citizen a person is a member of a collective body in which they enjoy equal rights with its other members and are thereby provided with recognition' (Mason, 1997, p.442).

Citizens can only be understood as colleagues if there is a significant degree of equality between

them. In both contemporary liberal and republican conceptions of citizenship, and in modern liberal-democratic states, citizens are seen as having equal legal, political and often social rights. But they are also different: typically in modern plural states they will not all share ethnic origin, or deep beliefs, either religious or cultural, since states and nations tend not to coincide. Citizens, like colleagues, do not share a single substantive view of their common good; they will routinely conflict over the details and overall direction of government in the polity. In existing liberal democratic states, and the theory which underpins them, citizens are *de facto* interdependent in multiple practices and membership of the state constructs common concerns which mean that citizens are not simply strangers to one another. Though they may not know well many members of the polity nor feel any emotional bond with them, nonetheless they are interconnected by a range of practices which make their ties more substantial than is often assumed.[12] In a more substantial republican politics, their connections will be stronger, as there is more public interaction of various forms, through which citizens jointly influence the conditions of their society, and create further networks of relationships.

As Hannah Arendt puts it, they live in 'a common world which relates and separates' them, within which 'a web of relationships' is framed through actions (Arendt, 1958, p.48). As she describes it, they are '*with* rather than *for* people', and express 'a multiplicity of viewpoints' (Arendt, 1958, pp. 160, 163). In her republican account, the key is their interaction in the public space growing out of a common world, which provides salient reference points even where disagreement and conflict are present, and where people understand the goals of the polity in very different ways. Even shared common goods between them are not simply identified and may be differently interpreted. Accordingly, Arendt sees citizens as bound not by common identity or shared cultural values, but by concerns arising from living in a common world and

participation in the public realm.

Since they share a public space in which they jointly participate in shaping their future, people who may begin as strangers in a republican state develop closer ties:

> The feelings of friendship and solidarity result precisely from the extension of our moral and political imagination...through the actual confrontation in public life with the point of view of those who are otherwise strangers to us, but who become known to us through their public presence as voices we have to take into account' (Benhabib, 1988, p.47).

Nonetheless this account of republican citizenship does not entail, as some interpreters of republican 'fraternity' have implied, that the connections between citizens are personal in the sense that they are analogous to family membership or close friendship. Nor are these relations necessarily the most central source of personal identity and fulfilment (though Arendt herself may have tended to this belief). This interdependence is more like that of colleagues, who may not know, like or agree with one another, but share a common fate and concerns. This is also more than a *modus vivendi*, an agreement to live together; or even an overlapping consensus, where people build on beliefs which they hold independently. They are connected not by loyalty to institutions or goals, but their interactions in a common public space.

Special obligations to fellow citizens

This interdependence in practices, whether *de facto* reiterated circles of interaction or more substantial citizenship, gives rise to special obligations different from those to family, close friends and strangers alike.

Thus Arendt distinguishes the respect between citizens as 'a friendship without intimacy,' and 'a regard for the person which the distance of the world puts between us (and this regard is independent of qualities we may admire or achievements we may esteem)' (Arendt, 1958, p.218). She distinguishes this from the love or compassion possible in smaller-scale private relations.

These involuntarily acquired obligations are owed to citizens, with whom we interact more or less as equals within the common world and public space of politics, though they may hold beliefs or represent cultures with which we cannot identify. We do not meet our responsibilities fully by observing laws and treating fellow citizens with civility and tolerance. But we do not have to love other citizens, affirm their views, share their deepest hopes and fears, or even avoid conflict with them.

Citizen obligations, like those of colleagues, may be summarised under the headings of communication, concern and trust. The object here is not to assert any particular depth or intensity of citizens' obligations, but to point to the general dimensions implicit in their reiterated interdependence in practices.

First, citizens may be expected to a reasonable degree to be informed about and participate in common affairs, both to listen to (and not just tolerate) the views of others and be prepared to explain their viewpoint, to be on the alert for injustice, and to support public life. As Parekh puts it,

> as members of a polity, citizens owe it to their fellow members and not to the civil

> authority to expose its wrong doings, to participate in the conduct of public affairs, to highlight prevailing injustices, and in general to promote the well-being of their community (Parekh, 1993, p.244).

Second, citizens owe it to one another to be informed about the general condition of fellow citizens, to be concerned about their welfare and prepared to support in relief of suffering.[13] Third, citizens need to express more trust in fellow citizens than in strangers, and to be more honest and trustworthy in return, though politics requires them to be more vigilant in their dealings than with family or friends.[14]

As with colleagues, these obligations may not be precisely specifiable, they require different degrees of participation and support from different citizens, and they vary from place to place. They are diminished where there are radically unequal relations between citizens, and can be overridden by other moral considerations. They would not apply, for example under apartheid, between a black South African and a member of the ruling regime, though they may apply between those subject to apartheid. These obligations to fellow citizens, like other moral obligations, may be less clearly specified than the duty to obey law and central authority (the narrow sense of political obligation), but their general features can be delineated and reflectively recognised. On this view, even where unjust government may render the duty of obedience to political authority suspect, citizens may still have obligations to one another, but these depend on a significant degree of equality between them. Nonetheless they are required, not supererogatory, and constitute a test of a good citizen.[15] The special interdependence of citizens means that these are not reducible to natural duties or doing one's fair share in a co-operative practice. These obligations, moreover, are not all such that they could be performed most effectively by a single central authority (as they might be if simply a matter of order or

distribution).[16]

Extensibility of citizenship

Although citizenship - and republican citizenship in particular - may seem very firmly bounded, on this analysis it is less radically exclusive than may at first appear. Like colleagues, citizens, multiply interdependent in practices framed by the state, need not be defined essentially in terms of opposition to a clearly defined out-group, in the way Mouffe does in emphasising the role of the 'constitutive outside' in cementing political community. Accepting that modern polities can no longer be united around a single substantive good, but rejecting the idea that this means there can be no common concerns between citizens, she invokes Carl Schmitt's argument that a political community is constituted primarily in opposition to a perceived external threat. This community of 'friends' is such primarily through joint opposition to an 'enemy', whom they may have to fight to preserve their way of life (Mouffe, 1992, p.225-239). But, even if groups are defined in distinction from others, it is by no means clear that political unity is primarily a function of opposition to an external enemy. On the analogy with colleagues we may see the ties between citizens as grounded rather in the recognition of reiterated interdependence, which is more fluid and extensible than Mouffe's model.

Of course the analogy has its limits. You are usually born a citizen, but become a colleague. Membership of a state may allow more voice than many colleagues enjoy, but the state also has more powers of legitimate coercion than other institutions. While both relations entail involuntary obligations, the conditions under which these lapse are different. It is generally easier to leave a job than a state. But someone can leave both citizens and colleagues more easily without recrimination than family or friends.[17]

Both colleague and citizen can accommodate *larger numbers* of people than can be intimately known or loved, unlike families and friends. So citizenship does not lose its meaning when 'diluted', even if direct contact with many fellow-citizens remains latent rather than being realised. For Arendt the respect for others that leads to solidarity can, unlike compassion, be extended: 'Solidarity partakes of reason and hence of generality; it is able to comprehend a multitude conceptually, not only the multitude of a class or people, but eventually of all mankind' (Arendt, 1963, p.88).

It may be argued that c*olleague* is inherently a more interpretative term than citizen. Thus its *range* can more easily be extended to include people in less immediate groupings. By contrast, people become fellow-citizens only by actually becoming members of the same state, or where overarching political institutions are created - as in the European Union, or perhaps in the new, more limited Council of the Isles between Britain and Ireland. Otherwise citizenship cannot be seen as a matter of expanding circles in the same way as colleagues. But the extension of citizenship and the creation of such over-arching polities is possible when citizens are defined simply as members of the same polity, living in a common world with common concerns, who have a potential for collective action, rather than being preselected by ethnic or cultural identity.

Finally the *special obligations* of citizen and colleague, rooted in interdependence in practices rather than cultural identity or feelings of attachment, are both compatible with other obligations that arise from interdependence. Economic, cultural and environmental globalisation progressively extends interdependence and, with it, obligations to more distant others on grounds that are at least not radically different from obligations to citizens. These are also more

easily extensible than the narrow sense of political obligation as obedience to the authority of a sovereign state.

Thus in crucial respects the analogy between colleagues and citizens is both relevant and non-redundant. It opens up a way beyond the misleading analogies of family, friends or strangers in suggesting that citizens can be significantly related and have special obligations to one another despite diversity, dislike and distance. It paves the way for constructive theorising beyond two polarised ideas of citizenship: one capable of extension, but so thin that it may in practice need to rely on pre-political identities to generate commitment, and one that elicits commitment at the cost of excluding or oppressing those outside a closed community, real or imagined.

IV: Implications for understanding political obligation

Seeing citizens and their special responsibilities according to the analogy of colleagues, rather than family, friends or strangers suggests that some arguments against special obligations to compatriots apply only to co-nationals and not to citizens.

Both the grounds and the motivation for obligations are different in the two senses of compatriots. Obligations to co-nationals require feelings of shared identity, those to citizens reflective recognition of interdependence. In the light of these differences I argue that obligations to fellow citizens are better grounded than those between co-nationals and do not have such negative particularist effects.[18]

The key feature of nationality is a collective sense of a common identity; whether based on

ethnic, linguistic or other cultural grounds, this is often rooted in an 'imagined community', and does not intrinsically require interdependence in practices between co-nationals. Special obligations to fellow nationals are sometimes defended on the *grounds* that nationality is an essential part of an individual's identity (Tamir, 1993). Identities, however, are not passively received but constructed, and something for which we must take responsibility. Vaclav Havel provides an apposite response to claims that identity justifies special obligations: 'Identity is above all an accomplishment, a particular work, a particular act. Identity is not something separate from responsibility, but on the contrary is its very expression' (Havel, 1998, p.46). Thus it is not clear that identity *per se* gives rise to any obligations to others. Grounding obligations on relations constitutive of identity is suspect, if those identities are negative or insignificant (Caney, 1996; Mason, 1997; Simmons, 1996).

On the account outlined here citizen obligations (like those of colleagues, and unlike those of family or friends) are grounded in interdependence in multiple practices. It is justifiable to think that people have obligations to those who are systematically vulnerable to their actions in this way, and with whom they can either co-operate in political interaction, or jeopardise their chances to shape their common future. They can realise, or fail to realise the good of citizenship, and the valuable relationships which constitute it. Moreover, whereas special obligations to fellow nationals are limited by a sharp boundary - the sharing of cultural identity - we have seen that those to fellow-citizens, based on interdependence in practices, are less sharply bounded.[19]

As well as the grounds, the *motivations* which are understood to be required to honour obligations are different: feelings of attachment and reflective recognition of interdependence in

practices, respectively. The mere existence of strong feelings is not necessarily a good guide to obligations. Feelings of loyalty or compassion may be appropriate or inappropriate; they are not purely expressive, but reflect perceptions which may or may not be valid. Therefore neither feelings of attachment nor a sense of identity can be translated uncritically into moral obligations. On this account of citizenship obligations are based not on an immediate sense of emotional attachment or identity, but on a reflective perception and taking of responsibility for relationships of interdependence.[20]

Finally, this may have some bearing on the question whether there can be associative political obligations. Understood as 'obligations arising from social relationships in which we usually just find ourselves (or into which we grow gradually) ... [which] involve no datable act of commitment, and ... involve requirements to show a certain loyalty and concern,' associative obligations between family or friends are widely recognised (Simmons, 1996, p.251).

Ronald Dworkin has suggested that we may think of political obligations in the same way (Dworkin, 1986, pp.195-215). However, he writes generally about family, friends and colleagues, without attempting to distinguish these relationships clearly. For him a polity is ideally a community in which citizens have special, personal obligations of general and equal concern for their fellow citizens, as they might for family, friends or colleagues. My approach has shown the very different characteristics of colleagues and their obligations from those of family and friends.

In criticism of Dworkin, A.J. Simmons has denied that there are strong grounds for associative political obligations (Simmons, 1996). First he rejects associative obligations as too vague for

political obligation. But precise specification is a relevant feature only of legal obligation (and not of obligations to colleagues or citizens). Both Dworkin and his critics blur political obligation narrowly understood with moral obligations to fellow-citizens. Next, Simmons maintains that arguments for associative political obligations rely too heavily on constitutive attachments and family analogies, including emotional commitment. On the analogy of colleagues citizens' special obligations are based on interdependence, not on constitutive attachments; are distinguished from family relationships, and are motivated by reflective assumption of obligations rather than emotional commitment. Simmons argues further that non-voluntarist accounts of special obligations typically entail an uncritical acceptance of local standards. But the account of colleagues/citizens and their obligations advanced here does not fall foul of this criticism; any particular interpretation of the obligations of citizens is subject to critical reflection. He argues finally that moral experience suggests that the bonds of citizenship are not as important to us as family, friends or even colleagues. However, if this is so, it is because people fail to perceive, or underestimate, the systematic interdependence of citizens even in liberal polities, not because their interdependence is limited or unimportant. At its weakest the relation of citizens is one of mutual vulnerability, and at its strongest it is a valued bond. No doubt a major transformation would be required if republican citizenship were to be institutionalised, but even on a less ambitious account and reality of citizenship, such obligations are justified.[21]

While it may not be possible to interpret political obligation in the narrow sense as an associative obligation, broader obligations to fellow-citizens may be validly characterised as such if clearer distinctions are drawn between different kinds of roles, in particular between those of family and colleagues, as I have done here. Not all relations or group membership

provide equally strong grounds for special obligations (as Dworkin himself recognises in his distinction between 'bare' and 'true' communities (Dworkin, 1986, p.201). If any relationships other than family and friend give rise to obligations, those of citizens, based on interdependence in practices are better grounded and can be independent of those of nationality.

Conclusion

The differences between colleagues and friends, family or strangers demonstrate that not all relations have to be conceived as either of close community or distant strangers. We learn more about citizens and their responsibilities by thinking of them as colleagues than as family, friends, strangers *or* countrymen, and we see that such a relationship may entail special obligations without being radically exclusive.

Mutual commitment is possible even among large and diverse bodies of people who share certain concerns of interdependence. Obligations to fellow citizens can be justified despite theoretical difficulties in grounding (narrower) political obligation and practical suspicions of uncritical patriotism to contemporary states. Rather than being radically exclusive, relatively substantial relationships and obligations between citizens are compatible with recognising obligations to more distant people interdependent in other ways. More intense political relations need not justify a weakening of international commitments. They do not automatically justify extremely restrictive policies on, for example, immigration or international aid. A wider range of different relationships and obligations can be negotiated by ordinary human beings than the radical distinction of community and association suggests. Rather than being faced with a polarised choice between cosmopolitan and nationally based obligations, we should think of

people as having responsibilities in irregularly extending and overlapping networks, in which citizenship, rather than nationality, constitutes one of the most significant frameworks.

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2. For example, Horton's arguments for a non-voluntarist account of political obligation call on family analogies. (Horton, 1993).

3. Friendship in the Aristotelian sense has a much wider meaning, and its different forms include many more relationships than the word currently connotes. A conception of civic friendship based on Aristotle's theory of friendship may have much to contribute to ways of understanding citizenship, but this requires distinguishing the 'civic' from other modern senses of friendship in several respects (Schwarzenbach, 1996).

4. Peter Morriss has drawn my attention to the fact that in highly conventional societies, there are specific rules for treating outsiders, which involve much more consideration than for unknown members of our own society.

5. See Dworkin, 1986; p.196-202; Hollis, 1992; Walzer, 1992; Horton,1993. But most do not distinguish it very clearly from relations between family and friends, often mentioning all three together. While I call on several elements of Dworkin's analysis here, my argument distinguishes more clearly between colleagues and these other kinds of relationships, and I articulate the meaning inherent in our experience of relations between colleagues in more detail.

6. The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines 'colleague' as: 'one who is associated with others in

office or in special employment; strictly said of those who stand in the same relationship to their electors or to the office which they jointly discharge (Not applied to partners in trade or manufacture).' (Compact Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary, 1971, p. 465).

7. While the relationship I am analysing is widely recognised, the term used varies with social context (e.g. 'work mate'), though in Germany, for example, factory floor workers address one another as *kollege*.

8. In arguing for an alternative to the dichotomy of passive membership of a close community and self interested contractual relations, others have used the analogy of neighbours: 'The language of neighbours...provides a middle way between the estranging liberal doctrine that we are distant from our ends, and the restricting communitarian doctrine that we are constituted by our community' (Mendus, 1992, p.15); 'Citizens form a sovereign body, whose leaders are accountable to its members and whose members have special duties to one another. This depends on setting a boundary between neighbours within and strangers without.' (Hollis, 1992, p. 32).

9. Those who work in companies, schools and universities may share a general project, for example that of gaining and transmitting knowledge, but they do not have a single goal in the same way as, say, shareholders. The conception of practice intended here is more MacIntyrean than Oakeshottian, in that every practice has internal and external goods, and is often associated with an institution. As Parekh has pointed out, Oakeshott's distinction of enterprise associations (based on purposes) and civil associations (based on practices) cannot be sustained. (Parekh, 1995).

10. These characteristics partly parallel the features of associative obligations that Dworkin points to: that they are special to members, owed to individuals, involve general concern rather

than contractual obligation, and require equal treatment for those in such relations. (Dworkin, pp.199-200). Thus the requirements of collegiality differ too from those of professionalism.

11. I here diverge from Mason's argument that only the relationship between citizens in the civic republican sense can be considered a basis for obligation. I follow his distinction between relations valuable in themselves and those that produce mutual benefits, but do not see as clear a distinction between the liberal-democratic and republican forms of citizenship as he does. Where he extrapolates from the analogy of friendship as a relationship which is valuable in itself, I take consider that of colleagues to be less clear-cut. For Mason liberal democratic citizens are less distinguishable from residents (Mason, 1997).

12. These affect the lives even of those who opt out, or do not appear to contribute significantly to the practice of politics are involved in these practices, such as recluses, the disabled and members of counter-cultural militias, whether they recognise them or not.

13. Schwarzenbach elaborates a similar point in her exploration of Aristotelian friendship from a feminist perspective (Schwarzenbach, 1996, p. 122).

14. There is evidence that social trust may sometimes be created from the top down, through the establishment of trust in political life (Putnam, 1993; Sztompka, 1998). 'Trustworthiness' sums up several aspects of what is called 'civic virtue' in republican thought.

15. Justifying special obligations need not imply that these are over-riding (though versions of civic republicanism that make citizenship the most important relationship may). They mean rather that they must be taken into consideration, and weighed with other obligations, not necessarily by applying rules, but through practical judgement.

16. See Goodin, 1988; Waldron, 1993.

17. A colleague speaks ironically of his 'former brother', whose political allegiances have

diverged from his.

18. For critiques of special obligations to fellow-nationals, see Caney, 1996; Jones, 1999.

19. Gilbert argues that interdependence is not a valid ground of national, as distinct from wider social obligations (Gilbert, 1996).

20. This is not to suggest that in these relations immediate feeling is replaced by abstract reflection and that feeling and reason are radically distinct (Nussbaum, 1986; Schwarzenbach,1996).

21. 'The existence of a relationship that one has reason to value is itself the source of special responsibilities, and these responsibilities arise, whether or not the participants actually value the relationship.' (Scheffler, 1997, p. 201).

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