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*Aristotle on Political Deliberation and Civic Friendship*

This paper aims to investigate the role of civic friendship in enhancing political deliberation in Aristotle. Friendship, for ancient philosophers, was a much wider concept than the modern one that stands for a private and intimate relationship that we choose ourselves. *Philia*, on the other hand, also includes relationships that we do not choose, such as family relationships, together with those that are not necessarily intimate, like relationships with work colleagues or with our fellow citizens. Civic friendship for Aristotle is just one form of friendship, and it belongs to the class of advantage friendship since it is based on the recognition of the utility or advantage we gain from the relationship. Here, I aim to emphasize another aspect of Aristotle’s civic friendship that goes beyond advantage and shows why civic friends do not use each other simply as a means to achieve benefit, but where they genuinely care for their fellow citizens. This specific other-regarding behaviour in civic friendship, realized in *polis*, can be understood as a model for effective political deliberation because it creates a foundation of trust and cooperation among citizens. Such a foundation is crucial for engaging in reasoned and constructive discourse on public matters. Civic friendship helps to mitigate partisan conflicts and encourages a collaborative approach to problem-solving, thus enhancing the quality of deliberative processes. By revisiting Aristotle’s ideas, the paper offers a framework for understanding and addressing the challenges of political polarization and fostering a more deliberative and cohesive political community.