

Friendship: Towards a Radical Grammar of Relating

Mihalis Mentinis

Interdisciplinary Centre of Intercultural and Indigenous Studies –ICIIS

Institute of Sociology

Faculty of Social Sciences

Pontificia Universidad Católica de Chile

Avenida Vicuña Mackenna 4860

Macul, 7820436

Santiago de Chile

Chile

e-mail: m.mentinis@gmail.com / mmentinis@uc.cl

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Abstract. The article discusses friendship as a centrifugal movement away from identity, similarity and sameness. In contradistinction to approaches that tend to look for the essence of friendship and/or discuss it as a relationship that takes place in a chronotopic vacuum, the argument presented here is based on a certain diagnostics which holds that contemporary friendship has been caught in the centripetal forces of commonality, security and trust in accordance with the psychopolitical demand for the production of shielded and encapsulated personhoods. Drawing on Esposito's notion of community not as a common property or a fusion of individuals, but as constituted by lack and abstraction, and with reference to anthropological evidence on the notion of friendship among the Mapuche Indigenous population of Chile, the article attempts to prefigure friendship as the opening-up of the individual to the outside, a relational experimentation, a radical grammar of relating that can rejuvenate the impoverished relational fabric.