

AFFECTIONATE INTERESTS AND INTERESTED AFFECTIONS
THE NORMATIVE LANGUAGE OF EARLY SEVENTEENTH CENTURY
INTERSTATE RELATIONS

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Abstract

This PhD thesis investigates the normative political language used in the early seventeenth century interstate relations on the basis of diplomatic letters written by the English, Venetian and French resident ambassadors at Constantinople in the 1620s. The existence of a common language is established and its main components are drawn up while focusing on the two main pillars of the discourse, the concepts of friendship and interest. The ongoing Thirty Years War, as the context of the diplomats' activity, as well as the cultural milieu of the Porte all contribute to the possibility of a thorough and extensive analysis of data.

The first chapter examines the language of interstate relations as patterned after human relations, and then focuses on the discourse of friendship and affections. It argues that the terminology and worldview behind it rested on Ciceronian humanist foundations, which formally were identical in the case of interpersonal and interstate relations. The way this language could operate among states is described with the various senses of a cluster of terms around friendship and affections.

The second chapter discusses those objects of the presented affection that served as the right goal for the activity of states. The three main components, common good, peace and fight against tyranny are discussed together with their concrete application in the context of the war. The vocabulary discussed shows a combination of the old and new humanist language, which were smoothly applied together.

The third chapter investigates the other main pillar, the concepts of interest and reason of state. It discusses how the two terms could or could not become an integral part of the already existing political language and attempts to give an explanation for the phenomenon.

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Introduction

The research question

The central question of this dissertation is whether a common political language applied in European interstate relations existed in the early seventeenth century, and if yes, what its characteristics were. The existence of a common language should be manifested in the general employment of a given vocabulary and a web of concepts which are decodable and comprehensible for all the participants in the same or very similar way. The application of this language in the communication among states would imply the presence of a shared political culture, and inevitably would function as a mirror of its verbally expressed norms and values.

Since the answer to the first question soon turned out to be yes, my research aimed at the reconstruction of this image in the mirror. The topic lies on the interface of three disciplines, the History of Diplomacy, International Relations, and the History of Political Thought/Discourse. None of these, to my knowledge, has ever embarked on a comprehensive study based on such source material. The usual tracks and research questions these disciplines have been following prevented them from pursuing this or a similar type of research.

Disciplinary background of the research question

History of Diplomacy

The discipline concerned with the history of diplomacy in the majority of cases deals with the diplomatic and political history of the modern period. A minority of this literature has addressed earlier times, and can be classified in four genres. One has

aimed at the description of the characteristics and processes connected to the evolvement of diplomacy in a relatively short period, like the seminal work of Garrett Mattingly, *Renaissance Diplomacy*.¹ Second, there are works which have examined a specific issue and its development through different ages, a type that could be exemplified by the Frey sisters' *The History of Diplomatic Immunity*.² Thirdly, more general and comprehensive studies that have been written with the intention to provide a description of all the relevant issues traditionally connected to the history of diplomacy. In such works, like M. S. Anderson's *The Rise of Modern Diplomacy 1450-1919*,³ beside the various issues strictly linked with diplomatic procedure, namely extraterritoriality, precedence, intelligence, immunity, education or the activity of spies, interpreters, the basic theoretical principles governing the relations between states or princes were also touched upon. Concepts such as natural law, law of nations and international law, balance of power and reason of state were summed up on the basis of the canonical authors with, understandably, no attention to nuances and differences.

Works belonging to the fourth type investigate certain historical events and political history from a diplomatic point of view. The favorite topics here are peace conferences and war periods, or the activity of a limited number of ambassadors. In these works the expressed norms and values generally received little or no attention, given the fact that the sample was not large enough to draw any conclusion based on it – although, most likely, the intention was also missing. Apparently, again, the theoretical background was to be reconstructed based on the writings of canonical authors with rare illustrations taken from diplomatic correspondence.

¹ Mattingly, Garrett, *Renaissance Diplomacy* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc, 1988).

² Frey, Linda S. and Frey, Marsha L, *The History of Diplomatic Immunity* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1999)

³ Anderson, Matthew Smith, *The Rise of Modern Diplomacy, 1450-1919* (London: Longman, 1993)

Recently, beside the desire to rethink the results of classical diplomatic history, such as the theme of the origins of resident diplomacy or the concept of the Renaissance state, some new directions have appeared that focused on various, mostly cultural issues, based on the primary sources. The central themes of this arising literature include the “image of the other,”⁴ or the modes of representation,⁵ the ties between diplomatic forms and the institutional development of states as well as the social aspects. Daniela Frigo expressed the need for a re-reading of diplomacy, which not only reconstructs the negotiations, alliances and aims of the European states, but examines “for each individual state the mentality and culture of its leaders...its disputes with other sovereigns, its wrangling over ceremonial and the conception of state and sovereignty embraced by its ambassadors.”⁶ Some of these new directions have triggered the examination of concepts and vocabulary to some degree, but not the complete political language. Frigo mentions “friendship” and “love”⁷ in her studies without any further reflection on their meaning and function. What she concentrates on more is the historical change in the figure and function of the ambassadors through the examinations of the terms applied for them. Based on the pieces written in the genre of the *perfect ambassador* she investigates the role and meaning of virtue and virtues such as prudence and examines discursive shifts.⁸

Despite the close connection in practice between diplomacy and the conduct of international relations, the two disciplines that claim to investigate them (history of

⁴ Rohrschneider, Michael and Strohmeier, Arno, *Wahrnehmungen des Fremden: Differenzenerfahrungen von Diplomaten im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert* (Münster : Aschendorff, 2007).

⁵ Roosen, William, “Early Modern Diplomatic Ceremonial: A Systems Approach.” *The Journal of Modern History* 52., no. 3. (1980): 452-476.

⁶ Frigo, Daniela ed., *Politics and Diplomacy in Early Modern Italy - the Structure of Diplomatic Practice, 1450-1800* Cambridge Studies in Italian History and Culture (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 6.

⁷ Frigo, Daniela, “Prudence and Experience: Ambassadors and Political Culture in Early Modern Italy,” *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 38:1 (2008), 15-34, 18.

⁸ *ibid*, 18.

diplomacy and history of international relations) have interlinked only to a minimal degree. In the three volume work entitled *Diplomacy*, which was edited in a way that it could paint the actual state of the art of the discipline in 2004, the basic differences that lay behind this lack of fruitful cooperation were listed by Colin and Miriam Fendius Elman. First they mentioned the contrast between the narrative-based explanations of diplomatic history that stressed the importance of accuracy and descriptive completeness regarding particular events, which results in a conjunctive logic, and the tendency for deductive, theory-based explanations of international theory. Secondly, they claimed that historians decline to make predictions whereas political scientists in general tend to believe that an explanation of a phenomenon can help to predict its future occurrence. Thirdly, international historians tend to focus on recent events, mostly on happenings that have a direct connection to the present.⁹ For these reasons the academic cooperation between the two fields is lacking. Students of international relations do not pay much attention to diplomacy,¹⁰ and students of diplomacy have usually not been theoretically oriented.¹¹

It is only recently that studies have appeared aiming at the revision of the interpretive approach to international relations based on the examination of power dynamics. They addressed dynastic relationships, relationships among aristocrats over the borders, ties of patronage and client networks. Closely connected to the history of diplomacy the actors and contexts have moved more in the focus.¹²

⁹ Elman, Colin and Elman, Miriam Fendius, "Diplomatic History and International Theory" in Jönsson, Christer and Langhorne, Richard eds., *Diplomacy*, (London: Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications 2004), 117-132.

¹⁰ Sharp, Paul, "For Diplomacy: Representation and the Study of International Relations." *International Studies Review* 1 (1999): 33-57.

¹¹ Jönsson, Christer and Laghorne, Richard eds., *Diplomacy*, (London: Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 2004), introduction xv.

¹² Frigo, *Prudence and Experience*, 16.

International Relations

Since the very beginning the bulk of the research carried out in the discipline of International Relations has focused on the discovery of generally applicable principles that account for the formation of the relations among states and the general driving forces which determine their behavior. The various schools that have emerged, Realist, Idealist, Rationalist, Marxist, Communitarian, Cosmopolitan, Liberal, and so on, all strove to prove for decades that their explanation of the motives and rules behind the interactions of states is the correct one. Despite the great debates, which seem to be over by now, they shared a general feature: all concentrated on almost exclusively contemporary events and regarded themselves intellectually equipped to predict the future behavior of the international actors. The IR specialists' attachment to the present and the future and to the generally applicable and (over)simplified theories as well as their canonical view that international relations began with the Peace of Westphalia prevented them from the engagement with issues and sources which were not in direct connection with those foci for a long time. For this reason the early seventeenth century and the preceding periods were basically excluded from the spectrum.

There have been only a few exceptions to this rule, and only recently can we witness a radical return to the study of history in IR. Mainly constructivist scholars have taken the lead. One of them was Erik Ringmar who, in his book *Identity, Interest and Action*, used the data connected to Sweden's entering the Thirty Year's War as a case study. He intended to demonstrate the correctness of the constructivist idea that questions regarding identity, even if it is the identity of a state, always take precedence over questions regarding interests. This idea is based on the one hand on the

assumption that interests can be outlined only when identity is defined,¹³ while on the other hand Ringmar applies the concept of self-fashioning for states. The result is a valuable study based on primary sources (mostly the minutes of the council meetings at the court, articles of peace treaties and diplomatic letters), satisfactory even for a historian. Ringmar examines the argumentation and the rhetoric used in order to discover the motivations for entering the war, but, with another target in mind, he does not analyze the language itself and does not connect it to the general discourse.

Christian Reus-Smit is also one of the few IR scholars who examined other historical periods than the modern one. In his book *The Moral Purpose of the State* he embarked on giving a constructivist account of international society, in part informed by theories of identity formation and communicative action, but it also builds on empirical observations about society formation and institutional construction. He discusses four interstate societies and the values that define the social identity of the state and the rightful state action, the moral purpose of the state as he terms it.¹⁴ Reus-Smit claims that the moral purpose of the Renaissance Italian society of states was linked to the pursuit of civic glory, while social ritual also received great emphasis, which resulted in the appearance of oratorical diplomacy.¹⁵ He mentions the central importance of the ritual expression of honor and self-worth through ceremonial rhetoric and gesture, which in his view established the legitimacy and social status of the agent.¹⁶ It is an important observation, but, again deriving from the more general

¹³ Ringmar, Erik, *Identity, Interest and Action: A Cultural Explanation of Sweden's Intervention in the Thirty Years War* Cambridge Cultural Social Studies. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 53.

¹⁴ Reus-Smit, Christian, *The Moral Purpose of the State: Culture, Social Identity, and Institutional Rationality in International Relations* Princeton Studies in International History and Politics (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1999), 39.

¹⁵ *ibid*, 64.

¹⁶ *ibid*, 79.

character of the study, he does not go any further than that in analyzing the political language.

The history of the role of ethics and norms did not receive much attention among IR scholars either. Without question different norms were described by various scholars, and even the concept(s) of the ethics of coexistence is articulated, not to mention new ideas that target the improvement of inter-societal relations.¹⁷ Mervyn Frost, one of the first proponents of the normative theory in IR first put forward the argument for the central role of norms in international relations in his book in 1986.¹⁸ However in 2009 he still felt the need to contrast the general view of the international sphere as one that is minimally organized on ethical principles and rather characterized by ongoing struggles of power. This approach regards the ethical language in international relations as deeply hypocritical, and a disguise for mere self-interest.¹⁹ Frost argues that IR scholars have a shallow understanding of the role of ethics, and he establishes it as the center of the relations among states, based on the social practice theory and promoting the constitutive approach, as he termed it.²⁰ He examines 20th and 21st century case studies and demonstrates the key role of ethics in the appraisal of actions. Although he studies verbal utterances and the rhetoric searching for the underlying core values, Frost disregards the issue of the degree of true embeddedness of the values in the decision making process, in other words the problematic of real motivation or an effort for appearance.

Interestingly, while one can detect the expression of a definite need for the ongoing improvement of International Political Theory on the one hand and a great

¹⁷ Cochran, Molly, *Normative Theory in International Relations: A Pragmatic Approach*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 2-3.

¹⁸ Frost, Mervyn, *Toward a Normative Theory of International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986).

¹⁹ Frost, Mervyn, *Global Ethics: Anarchy, Freedom and International Relations* (Routledge, 2008), 17.

²⁰ *ibid*, 18.

amount of abstract thinking on the other, the discipline produced no serious engagement with the theoretical heritage of the past. David Boucher in his introduction to the *Political Theory of International Relations* explained the phenomenon with the self-conscious choice of the proponents of the IR theories that dominated the field in the first sixty years of the discipline to reject the option of defining IR in terms of its illustrious past in an attempt to establish their own intellectual credentials.²¹ Yet, a canon of authors regarded as relevant was established quite early, and then became divided along the Realist/Idealist line. For example, Thucydides and Machiavelli supposedly belonged to the former, while Grotius and Kant to the latter “school,” and from that time on they were referred to along very similar lines, if at all. Boucher embarked on the task to provide the discipline with a fresh look on its heritage, and the outcome of his endeavor was hailed by many. However, when reading the book one immediately realizes the shortcoming quite general among IR scholars dealing with the past, which Duncan S. Bell describes as a tendency to ignore the complexity of the history of political thought and strip the authors of their context as if they could speak to present day problems.²² Boucher proposed a new approach that could combine the traditions of Realism and Universal Moral Order called Historical Reason. He discussed the works or parts of the works of various authors in detail. Still, he could not discard the habit of attributing present terminology and ideas in his analysis to the past authors. A good example is the way he connected Machiavelli and the concept of reason of state. He stated, based on the works of Knutsen²³ and Watson,²⁴ both IR scholars, that “the decline of the papacy

²¹ Boucher, David, *Political Theories of International Relations: From Thucydides to the Present* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 4-11.

²² Bell, Duncan S. A, “International Relations: the dawn of a Historiographical turn?” in *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, Vol. 3. No. 1, (2001), 115-126, 117.

²³ Knutsen, Torbjørn L, *A History of International Relations Theory: An Introduction* (Manchester; New York, 1992).

and empire as important focuses of universalism gave way to a Realism of naked power politics propelled by an undisguised *raison d'état*".²⁵ He discovered the elements of this Realism in Machiavelli's works and makes the staggering claim that "[t]hese together are interwoven with his exposition of the doctrine of *raison d'état* and the complex interrelationship between *virtu*, *fortuna* and *necessita*." Boucher's application of the present concept of *raison d'état* retrospectively for the early modern concept of reason of state and his connecting it to the figure of Machiavelli makes his approach simplistic, anachronistic and false. First of all, the first documentation of the term *ragione degli stati* dates from 1547, twenty years after Machavelli's death and thirty-five years after his writing the Prince. Secondly, Boucher equates the promotion of a sheer self-interested attitude with the concept of reason of state without any attention to the fact that the political writers of the early modern period employed it in various ways. It is also a mistake to claim that Machiavelli was the first writer to recommend a political conduct that disregards prevailing ethics to some extent. This idea arose in the writings of earlier writers, too, like John of Salisbury, Thomas Aquinas or even Cicero and Aristotle.²⁶

Astonishingly, Boucher showed familiarity with the works of the Cambridge School of Political Thought, making references to Pocock and Skinner. In this particular case however, he criticizes them saying: "Machiavelli's theory of reason of state, a theory which both Pocock and Skinner considerably underplay in emphasizing his association with humanist rhetoric needs to be constructed with reference to both

²⁴ Watson, Adam, *The Evolution of International Society: A Comparative Historical Analysis* (London ; New York: Routledge, 1992).

²⁵ Boucher, *Political Theories of International Relations*, 136.

²⁶ Burke, Peter. "Tacitism, Scepticism and Reason of State" in *The Cambridge History of Political Thought 1450-1700*, Burns, J.H. ed. 479-498 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991). 479-483.

The Prince and the Discourses.”²⁷ The fact that Chris Brown, an eminent scholar in IR theory himself, stated in his book review about Boucher’s work that “it is a remarkable achievement” and “there is no other history of international thought that comes even close to this in terms of level of sophistication or scope,”²⁸ well displays the level of engagement of the students of international relations with the history of political thought. Evidently, the historians of political thought and the IR scholars differed to a great extent in their handling of the heritage of the past, and the latter did not approach the former either in depth or precision. Given this state of affairs it is not surprising that Duncan S. Bell hailed the appearance of Richard Tuck’s book titled *The Rights of War and Peace: Political Thought and the International Order from Grotius to Kant*.²⁹

The IR mainstream still uses history in order to enhance an argument that is connected to the present. A relatively small pool of names and events are referred to repeatedly in the literature.³⁰ Let me quote Andreas Osiander about the connection of IR with history: “Almost never in IR literature is history discussed with anything approaching scientific rigour. When history is brought up in IR, there is no mention of the latest monographs or articles in historical journals, no taking of sides in ongoing controversies among historians, no discussion of the available evidence and its problems, and no awareness that historians will occasionally discover something new or, more frequently, come up with new interpretations. There is no recognition that our knowledge of the past might actually be insecure and historians’ beliefs,

²⁷ *ibid*, 137.

²⁸ Brown, Chris, “International Political theory – A British Political Science?” in *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, vol 2, No 1, (2000), 114-123, 117.

²⁹ Bell, *International Relations: The Dawn of a Historiographical Turn?*, 117.

³⁰ Osiander, Andreas, *Before the State: Systemic Political Change in the West from the Greeks to the French Revolution*. (Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 1.

shifting.”³¹ Osiander regards his endeavor as a new attempt to review the evolution of the political cultures of western civilizations. His book, *The State Systems of Europe* discusses the international order in various historical periods from the point of view of consensus and stability. He accords crucial role to the shared assumptions and the code of behavior which he regards as the “sum of the structural principles and procedural rules that form the object of a consensus among the international actors.”³² Writing about the period of the peace of Westphalia he selects some concepts, such as liberty or balance of power, and examines some characteristics in their usage from the point of view of stability, partly based on archival sources.³³

It is necessary to mention that some scholars of international law go back to times preceding Grotius in their research. They examine doctrinal developments from a legal aspect, which limits their inquiries to official kind of documents, such as peace treaties or manifestos. Randall Lessafer, one of the leading scholars of the field today, have devoted considerable attention to the term *amicitia* in such documents. Still, as it will be demonstrated in the dissertation, he could not reach but partial results due to the limitations of his approach.

History of Political Thought and History of Political Discourse

In the middle of the twentieth century two main schools began to focus on the history of political language: *Begriffsgeschichte* and the Cambridge School. They both shared the view that the recognition of the importance of language in understanding the development of histories of concepts, political languages and discourse is inevitable. Their orientation and methodological approach varied. *Begriffsgeschichte*

³¹ *ibid.*, 2.

³² Osiander, Andreas, *The States System of Europe, 1640-1990: Peacemaking and the Conditions of International Stability*. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 5-6.

³³ *ibid.*, 27-46, 80-85.

set out to examine the history of concepts deriving from the view that the meaning of terms is culturally defined and thus constantly changing in time. Its most prominent figures Reinhart Koselleck, Otto Brunner and Werner Conze regarded concepts in history, both as factors and as indicators of historical processes. It carried out a great project in order to map the range of meanings the concepts have been associated with during time. They focused on concepts that are of primarily relevance for the linguistic constitution of the modern world, and studied them over a time scale. The period mostly in focus was the one following Enlightenment. Drawing on the work of Saussure they examined both the diachronic and synchronic aspects of concepts within a semantic field in various historical periods. This method is able to tackle shifts and changes in meanings and requires the identification of concepts not in lexical terms but through its synonyms, antonyms and associated terms that formed a more or less unified vocabulary at a historical moment. This work included both the examination of the words available to designate the same or very similar concepts as well as the various meanings of the same word. The endeavor was consciously connected to a social historical inquiry.³⁴

In England the Cambridge School presented the new, so called contextualist, approach to intellectual history and the history of political thought. Their major criticism towards students of political theory was the same we encountered in the case of international relations theory: they employed the heritage of the past in an ahistorical manner to support their own theorizing activity,³⁵ studying the ideas of an

³⁴ Hampsher Monk, Iain, "Introduction" in Hampsher-Monk, Iain, Tilmans, Karin and van Vree, Frank eds., *History of Concepts: Comparative Perspectives*. (Amsterdam: University Press, 1998), 1-2.

³⁵ Hampsher-Monk, Ian, "Speech Acts, Languages or Conceptual History?" in Hampsher-Monk, Iain, Tilmans, Karin and van Vree, Frank, *History of Concepts: Comparative Perspectives*, 37-50, 38.

author solely based on the text and presupposed the existence of a set of perennial questions.³⁶

Another similarity between political theory and IR theory scholars was the tendency to quote and refer to the same canonical texts inherited. This practice deprived them of the possibility to tackle important historical connections and study works that for some reason had not been selected as components of the canon. J.G.A. Pocock and Quentin Skinner, the founders of the school, found it indispensable for a history of political thought to look beyond the “great texts” and thus recover the political language and the history of meanings.³⁷ They both emphasized the importance of the identification and reconstruction of the languages in which politics was pursued. Pocock especially put the emphasis on the discovery of Saussurian *langue* (language) and *parole* (actual performances) in the political culture of the past. His first great work *The Ancient Constitution and the Feudal Law* in 1957 is considered to have set a standard for the history and historiography of seventeenth century political thought.³⁸ For him the work of the historian of political thought entails the close reading of the text in order to identify languages and paradigms.³⁹ The identification of the language and vocabulary which the author applied on the one hand and its paradigmatic function on the other reveal what he might “say.”⁴⁰ In his other seminal work entitled *The Machiavellian Moment* he establishes civic humanism as the dominant paradigm in the early modern period. Naturally, Pocock has received criticisms, especially for his tendentious manner of selecting and linking the data in

³⁶ Hamilton-Bleakly, Holly, “Lingusitic Philosophy and the *Foundations*”, in Brett, Annabel S., James Tully, and Holly Hamilton-Bleakley eds, *Rethinking the Foundations of Modern Political Thought*. (Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 20-33, 22-24.

³⁷ Hamphsher-Monk, *Speech Acts, Languages or Conceptual History?*, 39.

³⁸ McKeon, Michael, “Civic Humanism and the Logic of Historical Interpretation” in DeLuna, D. N., Perry Anderson, and Glenn Burgess eds, *The Political Imagination in History: Essays Concerning J.G.A. Pocock* (Baltimore, MD: Owlworks, 2006), 59-99, 59.

³⁹ *ibid*, 60.

⁴⁰ *Ibid*, 60.

order to support his line of argument, as well as an artificial separation of discourses which distorts the perception of reality.⁴¹

Skinner, rather than studying the political languages of various discourses in history for their own sake, applied the so called speech act approach to the texts and their authors, and thus concentrated more on individual performance. It presupposed that the speaker/writer had a definite intention with the production of the text, and this intention, when examined in context, reveals what the author was really “doing” as well as what he “meant” when he said what he said. This work necessitates the recovery of the conventions and meanings available for the author in the period. Skinner emphasized the significance of the study of the works of minor authors (those outside the traditional canon) and identified them and the characteristics of a certain genre as the context to which the actual product should be compared. This way, he argued, even innovative usages of the language can be detected and connected to certain authors, and this is what he was most interested in.

His critics, similarly to the case of Pocock, mostly lacked the treatment of certain authors or trends that were equally important as the ones Skinner mentioned. For example, in Skinner's seminal work, the *Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, medieval scholasticism is neglected as a discussant of the subject of liberty.⁴² They also accused him with conveying a false picture through, for example, treating the second scholastic school as homogeneous and selecting the themes he finds important. This way he is proposed to have consistently misrepresented their

⁴¹ Gunn, J.A.W, “Republican Virtue Reconsidered” in DeLuna, D. N., Perry Anderson, and Glenn Burgess eds, *The Political Imagination in History: Essays Concerning J.G.A. Pocock*. (Baltimore, MD: Owlworks, 2006), 101-128, 104-105, 128.

⁴² Brett, Annabel, “Scholastic Political Thought and the Modern Concept of State” in Brett, *Rethinking the Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, 138-148, 132-137.

political thought.⁴³ He was also criticized for neglecting the in-depth treatment of religious and legal themes.⁴⁴ Only David Armitage mentioned from the missing themes the obvious lack of international political thought. Discussing Hobbes' views connected to this issue draws attention to the fact that Skinner completely ignores this part of Hobbes' work, whereas the international history theorists regard him as canonical.⁴⁵ Some have mentioned the narrow understanding of "context" by Skinner. He regards only the work of minor authors as context to the great ones, while the process of the transmission of texts and knowledge and the characteristics of the afterlife of texts would also supply researchers with information about political thought.⁴⁶

Remarkably, none of the critics of Pocock and Skinner mentioned the lack of the use of archival sources in their research. This phenomenon suggests that the bulk of the new generation of historians of political thought is quite satisfied with the old way of examining the published works of more or less well-known authors. Only a few cases can be mentioned when archival material was incorporated in research. An old and favorite source is the archival collection of the Florentine consulte and pratiche, that is the minutes and records of consultative assemblies, which both Maurizio Viroli⁴⁷ and Felix Gilbert⁴⁸ have turned to. Interestingly, Pocock himself wrote a short study based on archival material in 1978 which was not published until 2006, in which he explores the rhetoric and conversation of the House of Commons in

⁴³ *ibid.*, 142.

⁴⁴ Clark, J.C.D., "Barbarism or Religion" in D. N. DeLuna, *The Political Imagination in History: Essays concerning J.G.A. Pocock*, 211-229, 216.

⁴⁵ Armitage, David, "Hobbes and the Foundations of Modern International Thought" in Brett, *Rethinking the Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, 219-235, 220-221

⁴⁶ Boutcher, Warren, "Unoriginal Authors: how to do things with texts in the Renaissance" in Brett, *Rethinking the Foundations of Modern Political Thought*, 73-92, 78-86.

⁴⁷ Viroli, Maurizio, *From Politics to Reason of State: The Acquisition and Transformation of the Language of Politics, 1250-1600* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 132-134.

⁴⁸ Gilbert, Felix, "Florentine Political Assumptions in the Period of Savonarola and Soderini" in *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 20, no. 3-4 (1957): 187-214.

1628.⁴⁹ Among the recent publications one should mention John Marshall's book, who contextualized the work of Locke in the wider early modern history of toleration based partially on archival material⁵⁰ or Noel Malcolm's works on Hobbes⁵¹ and John Pell,⁵² which both heavily rely on archival material.

Apart from these, new trends in investigating political discourse have emerged only recently, mostly characterized by a more interdisciplinary approach, which can be termed as a "social and cultural turn", as the project to define the meanings of commonwealth and the conceptual field (network of associated terms) of which it was a key word in the early modern period testifies.⁵³ The social turn resulted in the examinations of the language use of all sorts of people. It is noteworthy that this particular project turned to the archival sources, rather than relying only on printed sources which was considered a completely new approach for the study of political discourse. On top it is also argued that the strictly textual context the significance of which Skinner had emphasized is too narrow and should be complemented with non-textual performance.

Introductory remarks to the thesis

As the research question has outlined, the characteristic language(s) of early modern interstate relations stand in the focus of my dissertation. The extensive

⁴⁹ Pocock, J.G.A., "Propriety, Liberty and Valour: Ideology, Rhetoric and Speech in the 1628 Debates in the House of Commons" in D. N. DeLuna, *The Political Imagination in History - essays concerning J.G.A. Pocock*, 231-260.

⁵⁰ Marshall, John, *John Locke, Toleration and Early Enlightenment Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006)

⁵¹ Malcolm, Noel, *Aspects of Hobbes* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), *Reason of State Propaganda and the Thirty Years' War: an unknown translation by Thomas Hobbes*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

⁵² Malcolm, Noel and Stedall, Jaqueline A, *John Pell (1611-1685) and his Correspondence with Sir Charles Cavendish: the mental world of an early modern mathematician* (Oxford: Oxford university Press, 2005).

⁵³ Knights, Mark, "Towards a Social and Cultural History of Keywords and Concepts by the Early Modern Research Group" *History of Political Thought* 31, no. 3 (2010): 427-448.

examination of the normative political language of daily use in pre-Westphalian interstate relations is new: to my knowledge no similar research has ever been carried out, not even in relation to other periods. The features of the disciplines in the frame of which one would expect the appearance of such a topic, summarized above, account for this omission. International relations scholars did not pay much attention either to the period or to the topic of political languages, not to mention their aversion regarding archival research. The history of diplomacy lacked any interest in the history of political language. The history of political thought or intellectual history ignored the topic of international relations and it used almost exclusively the work of great and minor authors for its inquiries, without any interest in professional but “non-authorial” language users, which fact made them rarely seen guests at archives.

The dissertation will hopefully show that this area deserves a lot more attention than it has so far received. The results not only add new knowledge to each related discipline, but also promote a new framework for the contextualization of their present theories and views. The typical political scientist approach which treats the great thinkers as milestones in the history of political thought could truly assess their performance only if they were familiar with the everyday political language of the period. I truly believe that the approach this research pursues could lead to rich minefields waiting to be explored. However, due to the time-consuming nature of such a project, no more could have been achieved here than providing a snapshot of the political language used among some international actors in the early seventeenth century.

Talking of international or interstate relations and actors I would like to underline that I have no intention to take part in the debate about the correctness of any of these terms, namely, whether *international* can be used for this period or

whether *interstate* is acceptable in the light of the great debates about the concept of state in the period. I opted for the usage of *interstate* for the sake of avoiding anachronism and knowing that it will be comprehensible even for those who are disturbed by its application. I exercised much more pedantry in the case of wording that has direct relevance to my thesis. The most telling example for this practice is the avoidance of the generally applied expression in the secondary literature: *anti-Habsburg*. The reason for this is that the term never ever appears in the sources. References are always made to the *Casa d'Austria* and the *King of Spain*, together or separately. One could definitely argue that the *Casa d'Austria* is basically the equivalent of the *Habsburgs* as a name for a dynasty. Interestingly, in the sources in some cases this statement appears to be true, but in others it does not. All in all it could have functioned in the text of the study as a technical term, but in my view its employment would have attributed an overtone to the intentions of the opponents of the Emperor and the King of Spain which did not necessarily exist.

I aimed at tackling the vocabulary and the reproduction of the languages used in the sources to talk about the interstate relations as completely as possible, giving account of unexplored nuances in meanings. I regarded the whole vocabulary as foreign, and for this reason I discuss extensively words which might even seem self-evident for the present ear, like *friend*. I definitely do not claim that every political actor in the age used the languages in the same manner. Both individual and regional differences had their space. What I state is that even differences remain inside the big picture that I am painting. The common stock is displayed on the following pages from which speech performances must have drawn as a rule.

It is important to emphasize that apart from a small number of texts composed for the public, the letters were not meant to reach a wide audience. For this reason

their wording did not aim at propagandistic goals, the speech act behind a letter confined itself to the distribution of information and, without doubt, the portraying of the writer in the eyes of the reader (superior or fellow diplomat) as an able man suitable for various political tasks in his future career. Consequently their language use had to comply with the conventions and be comprehensible and precise in order to facilitate smooth understanding. One cannot expect individual and innovative intention behind the wording, but rather a full picture of the everyday verbal political culture.

Rhetoric is regarded as the channel through which messages were articulated. Actors could apply only the languages and vocabulary available for them, thus it would be a mistake to consider rhetoric as sole formality. In my understanding it reflects the publicly professed value system to which every educated man was required to align. As the dissertation will demonstrate, this value system determined not only the form of communication but also the norm of behavior.

I decided to build my research on the letters and dispatches of resident ambassadors working in Constantinople during the Thirty Years War. The sheer bulk of this material guaranteed that I would find enough examples of the language use in them to make definite statements about its characteristics. Resident ambassadors were required to draw up a dispatch at least once every other week, and even if many of them got lost on the way, after their scan reading I could select at least five hundred dispatches per ambassador for analysis.

I supposed that no other sources could provide me with more data in my research than these, given some of their characteristics. First of all they were produced by diplomats who, as their short biographies below will show, belong to the best

practitioners of the political culture of their age. Their letters were composed during a war period, which assured a dynamic of events and situations both on the political level and in the ambassadors' close environment, about which they constantly had to report and in which they needed to function. Thus, in their dispatches and letters they revealed a wide range of the political concepts and the full scale of the political language while describing the events and giving information on what they perceived as important.

Another great advantage of using these sources was that the vast majority of them were prepared at the same time and at the same place. This fact allowed for a comparison of the languages applied in the same situations for the same events. As a result I could regard the discourses they displayed as representative of the language used among diplomats in Europe in general. My aim was to identify the language itself with its main features, being aware of the possible differences in the proportion of the application of certain components according to individual and cultural characteristics. Its overarching nature assured that despite possible individual features the language functioned within definite boundaries of meanings that the professionals all understood and reflected the widely accepted moral and legal principles. The concepts of this language made up an ethical and normative system which the diplomats professed on the verbal level and tried to act according to it at least on the surface.

The residents and their background

Guistinian Zorzi

In the Venetian institutional system diplomatic appointments were regarded as other public offices of government, and were the exclusive preserve of the nobility.⁵⁴ For this reason it is no wonder that one meets the same family names throughout the centuries, which also suggests a high degree of routine and professionalism with which an appointment was carried out. The public office feature of the ambassadorial work presented itself in the fact that all aspects of the work, such as the duration, the time permitted to accept the nomination and arrange the departure, the sanctions applied in case of refusal etc, were defined according to the appointment itself and not according to the person selected.⁵⁵ Typically, one son of noble families was destined to follow a diplomatic career, which frequently resulted in gaining public positions of the highest level. After a sound classical education (Latin, Greek, rhetoric and philosophy), which did not automatically end in a university degree, the future diplomats joined the entourage of a relative on an ambassadorial mission or an envoy on ceremonial mission (*di complimento*) in order to gain some insight in the profession.⁵⁶

The ambassadorial post in Constantinople differed from the rest in two aspects. Firstly, due to the peculiarity and significance of the relationship between the two major factors in the Mediterranean, Venice and the Ottoman Empire, those patricians were selected as bailos, that is residents, who had spent several decades on the merchant galleys. People with a diplomatic career behind were mostly appointed if

⁵⁴ Zannini, Andrea, "The Crisis of Venetian Diplomacy", in Frigo, *Politics and Diplomacy in Early Modern Italy - the Structure of Diplomatic Practice, 1450-1800*, 109-146, 113.

⁵⁵ *ibid*, 114.

⁵⁶ *ibid*, 116.

either they had excellent political connections or were meant to be rewarded for their outstanding former activity,⁵⁷ which is related to the second difference: Constantinople was the only post which yielded financial profit to the resident, thanks to the revenues from the tolls levied on all the merchant ships flying the flag of Venice, and the money he received for the so called extraordinary expenses.⁵⁸ A position in Constantinople could thus restore the lost amount of money spent on other embassies.

The bailos acted as protectors of Latin rite Christians until around 1600.⁵⁹ They were usually elected for two years, which became frequently extended for three and sometimes even longer, like in the case of Guistinian Zorzi (also styled as Giorgio Giustinian), who stayed for seven years.⁶⁰ He was the first-born son of a rich and prestigious Venetian family. He spent all his life in the field of politics. He represented the republic at the duke of Savoy from 1603, in London from 1606, in Paris from 1610 and at the court of the Emperor from 1614 until 1619. In May 1620 he received his appointment to Constantinople and stayed there until July 1627. He died in 1629.⁶¹

Simone Contarini

Born in Rubiana, Contarini followed the usual path of education, which he completed with attending moral philosophy, natural philosophy and mathematics courses at the University of Padua. He was also a poet. At the age of 22 he was a member of the

⁵⁷ *ibid*, 118.

⁵⁸ *ibid*, 128. Another view contradicts this statement: Dursteler, Eric, "The Bailo in Constantinople Crisis and Career in Venice's Early Modern Diplomatic Corps." *Mediterranean Historical Review* 16, no. 1 (2001): 1-25, 19.

⁵⁹ Dursteler, *The Bailo in Constantinople*, 7.

⁶⁰ *ibid*, 17.

⁶¹ "Dizionario-Biografico" http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/giorgio-giustinian_ (accessed June 18 2011).

Venetian embassy sent to congratulate Sixtus V on his election as Pope. He represented the Republic at the court of the duke of Savoy for three years, and later in Madrid for four years. In 1606 he was elected bailo in Constantinople, and from 1613 to 1617 he acted as a resident in Rome. Subsequently, his task was to go to Florence, Urbino, Modena, Parma and Mantova to solicit pro-Venetian and anti-Austrian declarations from them. Following a relatively short embassy to the French King, Contarini was elected a procurator of St. Marc. The procurators were magistrates whose rank was preceded only by the doge. The position was awarded for an exceptional service done to the Republic of Venice. In 1621 Contarini was sent as extraordinary ambassador to Ferdinand II, in the same year also to Spain. In 1623 he became general governor (*proveditore generale*) of the Terraferma. From the end of 1624 until June 1625 he worked again in Constantinople in order to obtain a written declaration from Murad IV to confirm the Turkish-Venetian treaties and achieve that anyone traveling to Venice could freely pass the Ottoman territories. Contarini continued his active diplomatic life and died in 1634.⁶²

Unfortunately, there is very little information available about the bailo following Zorzi, Sebastian Venier. All the information I found about him is that he was also elected as procurator of St. Marc,⁶³ which presupposes a similar career to that of Contarini.

Philippe de Harlay, count of Césy

Césy was an offspring of the prestigious noble family of de Harlay. Unfortunately there is no data available concerning his early years and education. The first concrete

⁶²“Dizionario-Biografico” http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/simone-contarini_ (accessed June 18 2011).

⁶³ Dursteler, *The Bailo in Constantinople*, 15.

piece of information is his marriage to Jacqueline de Bueil, arranged in 1604 by Henry IV, one of whose mistresses the young bride was. The couple divorced two years later, and the king raised Césy's pension.⁶⁴ The story reveals that Césy belonged to the inner circles at the court. He arrived in Constantinople at 1619 and stayed until 1640. Beside the representation of the interests of the King of France the French residents were required to ensure that the capitulations were respected and the French merchants did not suffer any disadvantage. Another important role the French residents traditionally played was that of the protector of Christians and the sacred places on the territory of the Ottoman Empire.

Sir Thomas Roe

His father was a haberdasher and a landowner, and his mother the daughter of a gentleman who had been Lord Mayor in 1568. After his father's early death, his mother married Sir Richard Berkley, whom Queen Elizabeth greatly honored in September 1592 by favoring his manor house for her stay for three days during her summer progress. In the following year Roe, at the age of twelve, matriculated as a commoner of Magdalen College, Oxford. He was below the average age of admission. He mastered Latin, being the conversational language at the Magdalen and the language of disputations in the second year. The curriculum included rhetoric, logic, metaphysics, Greek, Hebrew and cosmography. His humanist education comes through in his dispatches, where he frequently applies Latin quotations and references to past events from Antiquity.

⁶⁴ Gérard Tongas, *Les relations de la France avec l'Empire Ottoman durant la première moitié du XVII^e siècle e l' Ambassade á Constantinople de Philippe de Harlay, Comte de Césy (1619-1640)* (Toulouse, 1942), 14-15.

After studying for four years, he enrolled as a student in Middle Temple, one of the four Inns of Court, which admitted only true gentlemen, and was a fashionable way to end their education. After that he became a servant of the Queen and friends with Ben Jonson and John Donne. Soon he gained the position of Esquire of the body to the queen,⁶⁵ and was knighted by James I.⁶⁶ He participated in and later financed expeditions to Virginia and Guayana. At the court he was on especially good terms with Prince Henry, James' second son and Elizabeth, the king's daughter. Following her marriage to Frederick the Count Palatine, Roe was among the entourage that escorted Elizabeth to her new home.⁶⁷ The fact that Elizabeth entrusted Roe with matters of confidential and delicate nature, and called him "Honest Thom,"⁶⁸ well testifies their close relationship. In 1614 he became a member of parliament,⁶⁹ and following its dissolution he was appointed as the first English ambassador to the court of the Great Mogul.⁷⁰ There the bulk of his work consisted of the accommodation of the English commercial interests, the achievement of an equal treatment for them with the Portuguese and the Dutch, and to promote peaceful working conditions at least with the latter. The four years of his embassy was considered highly successful,⁷¹ which most probably had a role in his appointment to Constantinople in 1621, initially for four years. He left Constantinople in 1628.

Roe was a devoted protestant, and a true supporter of the cause of Elizabeth. When on the way back from Constantinople he visited the court of the king of Bohemia, he met the daughter of Baron Vaclav Vilem Rupa. Rupa participated in the

⁶⁵ Strachan, Michael. *Sir Thomas Roe, 1581-1644: A Life*. (Salisbury: Michael Russell Publishing Ltd., 1989), 1-5.

⁶⁶ *ibid*, 7.

⁶⁷ *ibid*, 39.

⁶⁸ *ibid*, 45.

⁶⁹ *ibid*, 47.

⁷⁰ *ibid*, 57.

⁷¹ *ibid*, 116.

defenestration in 1618 and became head of the provisional Bohemian government.⁷²

Roe adopted the girl.

After his return to London he continued to be applied in key ambassadorial tasks, such as a Baltic mission in the frame of which he negotiated with Gustavus Adolphus and King Sigismund III in order to mediate a truce. In 1641-1642 He acted as diplomat in Ratisbon and Vienna, and died in 1644.

Constantinople as a diplomatic center

Constantinople as a diplomatic center in the 1620s played a prominent role. It was the only place where the English, French, Venetian, Dutch and Imperial residents were all present as well as the representatives of the Ottoman tributary states, Transylvania, Wallachia and Moldavia. The fact that the Ottoman empire did not apply resident embassies in Europe raised the significance of the European residents in the relationship of their country and the Turks. Beside their trade-related duties the political tasks of the Western ambassadors became considerably augmented during the Thirty Years War. They were in the position to acquire first-hand information openly or secretly about the plans of all the major European powers including Spain. Although the Spanish King did not have a resident at the Porte, his relationship with the Porte was an important source of information and its influence a field of activity of his opponents. Despite the fact that the Ottoman Empire did not officially enter the Thirty Years War, it was a significant factor that all the European powers needed to take into account, especially because its behavior was difficult to predict. Even more so, as Gábor Bethlen, the Prince of Transylvania, actively participated in the war right from the beginning. He attacked the Emperor three times between 1619 and 1627. At

⁷² *ibid*, 197.

that time Transylvania was a semi-dependent client state of the Ottoman Empire, free to pursue its foreign policy to a considerable degree.

The advantages of the Porte as a rich center of information were considerably diminished by two of its characteristics. One was its distance from the home countries where the diplomats had to send their dispatches. An exchange of letters between London and Constantinople took at least 3 months which could be easily prolonged due to bad weather or the decision of the Venetian postal service which ran every fourteen days, and regularly held back letters and opened them. The second was the need for translators (dragomans) for discussions with the Turkish officials, who meant a considerable threat to secrecy. In the first place, there were a limited number of them, which in certain cases resulted in the same person translating for different ambassadors. But even if it did not happen, some dragomans could be bribed to reveal details of a discussion.

Efficient diplomatic work had serious obstacles at the Porte in the period. On the one hand, the Ottoman Empire was highly centralized, but on the other hand the sultan delegated much of his authority to the viziers and other executive officials. The grand vizier acted as the supreme deputy of the sultan, but even he could not act independently from the Divan, the council. The Divan represented the three major groups of the Ottoman ruling class (the military men, the religious men and the bureaucrats).⁷³ The structure could work well as long as it had a strong handed sultan. However, during the first half of the seventeenth century this was not the case. Due to the decision of Ahmed I not to continue the custom of royal fratricide, which so far guaranteed a smooth succession procedure following the sultan's death, two men

⁷³ Ágoston, Gábor and Bruce Alan, *Masters Encyclopedia of the Ottoman Empire* - Facts on File Library of World History. (New York, NY: Facts On File, 2009), 11.

remained entitled to rule: his brother Mustafa, mentally weak, and his son Osman, still a child. A struggle of court factions ensued, which first ended in Mustafa becoming the sultan (1617-1618) and then being replaced by the fifteen year-old Osman (1618-1622). Osman was killed by the dissatisfied Janissaries and Mustafa returned (1622-1623), until he was also killed to secure the succession of the then eleven years old Murad (1623-1640), son of Ahmed. During the 1620s thus the queen mothers and the wives of the sultans backed by various court factions had considerable influence in state matters, which meant unreliability and unpredictability in political matters. The grand viziers could not stay long in their offices because the various factions in power put their own men in the position. At such changes the ambassadors had to restart everything from the beginning. This situation was worsened by the Turkish officials' custom to accept bribes in order to intervene in some matter, which, due to the frequently changing power relations at the Porte might have had no result, or they supported the party which paid more. The letters of the ambassadors are filled with complaints about the working conditions at the Porte.

Except for times of open hostility the Turkish officials usually respected and defended diplomatic immunity at the Porte,⁷⁴ but the uncontrolled behavior of soldiers in the streets filled all men's and especially Christians' hearts with fear.

In order to achieve certain goals (like the regulation of Turkish officials who infringed the commercial capitulations or the persuasion of the Porte not to make peace with the King of Spain) the four residents (the English, Dutch, French and Venetian) resolved to common petitions, which proved more efficient than individually complaining. However, their plan for cooperation failed in a great number of cases due to the debate between the French and the English ambassador

⁷⁴ Eric Dursteler, *The Bailo in Constantinople*, 18.

over precedence. The issue of whose signature is to be put in the first place was irresolvable.

The sources

The research is based on the diplomatic correspondence of the English resident Sir Thomas Roe, the French resident Philippe de Harlay, Count of Césy and the Venetian ambassadors, Giustinian Zorzi and Sebastiano Venier. The English and the Venetian sources were published, the former in 1740, the latter in 1886. The French papers are preserved in the Bibliothèque Nationale de Paris. Roe served as a resident in Constantinople between 1621 and 1628, Césy between 1619 and 1640, and the two bailos between 1624 and 1629, one after the other. The diplomats wrote in their mother tongue to their superiors and peers and used Italian among each other. Beside the papers sent by them, other correspondents also appear, such as the two English Secretaries of State, Isaac Wake, the English resident in Venice and David Carleton, the English resident at The Hague and even the wife of the Winter King and daughter of James I, Elizabeth. A few dispatches from the Venetian resident at London will also be referred to. Césy's dispatches were written to his superiors, including Richelieu and Father Joseph, his confidant.

The Vocabulary of Affections

Sociability and Friendship

According to major theorists discussing issues connected to interstate relations in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, like Francisco de Vitoria (1492-1546), Francisco Suarez (1548-1617) and Alberico Gentili (1552-1608), the sociability of men, which call them to form communities, constitutes one of the pillars of well-functioning human relations. The well-known Aristotelian image of man as a social animal¹ and that of mankind as the large community formed by the entire world and the whole human race² served for them as the foundations of the community not only of individuals, but of states as well. Two main explanations, both inherited from antiquity, were set forth to account for men's inclination to sociability. One of them emphasized the need for mutual assistance, the other the natural feeling of love towards one another. These two interpretations were not only compatible, but sometimes even supported each other, and were analogously expanded to describe the relationship of states as the quotation from Suarez displays:

“the human race, into howsoever many different peoples and kingdoms it may be divided, always preserves a certain unity, not only as a species, but also a moral and political unity enjoined by the natural precept of mutual love and mercy...therefore, although a given sovereign state, commonwealth or kingdom may constitute a perfect community in itself...each one of these states is also, in a certain sense and viewed in relation to the human race, a member of that universal community; for these states when standing alone are never so self-sufficient that they do not require some mutual assistance, association and intercourse at times for their own greater welfare and advantage, but at other times also of some moral necessity or need. This fact is made manifest by the actual usage.”³

¹ Suarez, Francisco (Williams, Gvldys and Davies, Henry eds), *Selections of Three Works of Francisco Suarez: De Legibus, Ac Deo Legislatore*, 1612 ; *Defensio Fidei Catholicae, Et Apostolicae Adversus Anglicanae Sectae Errores*, 1613 ; *De Triplici Virtute Theologica, Fide, Spe, Et Charitate*, 1621. Vol. 20 Classics of International Law, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1944), 336.

² Gentili, Alberico, *De Iure Belli Libri Tres*. Classics of International Law. (Washington DC: Carnegie Institution, 1931), 3.

³ Suarez, *Selections*, 349.

In the particular case of interstate relations human beings as a community own the natural resources of the Earth, such as the seas,⁴ they have the right to trade with each other and thus share their products and gain access to those of which they are in need. Their common goal is to assure peaceful living conditions for everyone, according to the Ciceronian humanism and the law of God,⁵ as well as to achieve mutual well-being.⁶ The ideal *modus vivendi* consists of the “harmonious fellowship and intercourse of all nations with respect to one another.”⁷ The main axiom of the worldview professed by the theorists and presented above is that men should have and, among normal circumstances, they do have friendly disposition toward each other, which holds for the individuals and the commonwealths to the same extent. The route straightly led to the consideration of friendship as the highest form of the inclination to sociability.

States were regarded as organically human constructions and for this reason the laws applicable to them were all based on the same foundations as the laws for individuals. Thus in Vitoria’s view *ius gentium*, the law of nations, was not only in harmony with natural law, to which belonged “those things which are necessary for the governance and conservation of the world,”⁸ but its basic principles derived from it.⁹ In Gentili’s definition the “law of nations is that which is in use among all the nations of men, which native reason has established among human beings and which is equally observed by all mankind, such a law is natural law...like a custom and is established in the same manner.”¹⁰ Suarez separated *ius gentium* from natural law,

⁴ Gentili *De iure belli libri tres*, 91.

⁵ *ibid*, 133.

⁶ *ibid*, 355.

⁷ Suarez, *Selections*, 349.

⁸ Vitoria, Francisco de (Pagden, Anthony and Lawrance, Jeremy eds), *Political Writings* Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 305.

⁹ *ibid*, 35, 173.

¹⁰ Gentili *De iure belli libri tres*, 8.

though found it understandable that “so many persons confuse it therewith, or hold that ius gentium is part of the natural law” due to their “close affinity.”¹¹ In his opinion ius gentium constitutes an “intermediate form between natural and human law.”¹² He differentiated two meanings of ius gentium, one designating the laws that are common for most nations, and another, the collection of those laws that prescribe the mode of conduct between states.¹³ Suarez considered the latter as the real ius gentium, but rejected the idea that each law that concerns interstate relations fall under ius gentium. In his view laws of various origins dictate the right behavior for sovereigns.

As it can be seen theorists did not agree completely about the essence of ius gentium and its relation to the natural and human laws. Nevertheless, they all agreed that the laws prescribing the mode of conduct of states derived from the same roots as the laws dictating individual relations. Within the common frame some differences occurred naturally between the two systems, which originated in the dissimilar conditions among which they operated. For example in the lack of a supreme authority and consequently that of coercive power in interstate relations the principle of bona fide, good faith, gained a central role. Its task was to assure the rule of “the plainer and more natural justice” without the strictness and refinement of the civil law. Gentili emphasized that only good faith should be considered, not fine points of law¹⁴ in agreements and transactions on state level. In case of unresolved wanton injuries just wars could follow.

¹¹ Suarez, *Selections*, 325.

¹² *ibid*, 325.

¹³ *ibid*, 347.

¹⁴ Gentili, *De iure belli libri tres*, 204.

Interstate relations were primarily described as relationships between princes. The figure of the prince smoothly bridged the gap between the human and abstract aspects of the formation we now call state. The relationship among states was perceived as formed after the relationship among single human beings. This state of affairs both supported and was supported by the development of a juridical thinking in which one can mostly detect analogies in what is defined right and lawful among states and among human beings. This analogy became pronounced even in examples and was based on the overall dominance of the law of nature in human affairs. Vitoria built his argumentation mostly on this kind of parallels, such as “if it is never lawful to dispossess the legal owner in an unresolved civil or private case, then it cannot be lawful in the disputes of princes”¹⁵ or “we are allowed to punish our domestic malefactors by depriving them of a fortress or a house, according to their crime and therefore we must have the same rights against our external enemies.”¹⁶ Gentili declared that “to kill in self-defense is just; I consider it still more valid with regard to states.”¹⁷ Suarez, in the same vein, applied the analogy of an individual to repel force by force to the behavior of states.¹⁸ What generally was regarded legitimate in case of individuals served as a point of reference in the argumentation about what was perceived as lawful in the relationships of sovereigns. Moreover, the fact that the latter were public personages put an even greater emphasis on the rightness of these laws and the importance of their observation.¹⁹ Thus it can be claimed that the same broad legal framework built on the same principles defined both types of relations which rooted in the similar perception of the character of the relationship between the units at the two levels. Therefore it is not surprising that the language used to describe

¹⁵ Vitoria, *Political Writings*, 310.

¹⁶ *ibid.*, 324.

¹⁷ Gentili, *De iure belli libri tres*, 59.

¹⁸ Suarez, *Selections*, 804.

¹⁹ Gentili, *De iure belli libri tres*, 59, 70, 73.

relationships between states did not differ from the one applied among individuals. All this is manifested in the language of early seventeenth century interstate relations. One of the terms appearing to have a central role in describing both human and interstate relationships in the period is *friendship*.

It is noteworthy to mention that Aristotle in the *Nicomachean Ethics* gives an outline of this human relationship that served as a basis for a great number of future treatises.²⁰ He states that friendship is an absolute necessity in life and no one would choose to live without friends.²¹ What is more, it is considered a noble thing that is why people praise those who love their friends, and having many friends seems to be something noble.²² Friendship builds on mutual affection and friends ought to wish good things for the other's sake.²³ Aristotle distinguishes three types of friendship, one formed for pleasure, one for utility and one for virtue, and claims the first two are easily dissolved once the reason behind their establishment ceases, only the third one can be long lasting.²⁴ He dwells on the issue of friendship for utility, underlying that it is a rightful relationship only that it cannot compete with the noble character of the friendship for virtue. Affection serves as the strong bond between friends which involves intensity of feeling or desire and intimacy.²⁵ Just like Erasmus later, Aristotle emphasizes the presence of equality in friendship.²⁶

Beside the enormous impact of Aristotle on Western culture, the letters and treatises of Cicero and Seneca are held to have had a great literary influence in the

²⁰ Langer, Ullrich. *Perfect Friendship : Studies in Literature and Moral Philosophy from Boccaccio to Corneille* Histoire (Des Idées Et Critique Littéraire. Genève: Librairie Droz, 1994), 34-35, 47.

²¹ Aristotle. *Nicomachean Ethics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 1155a,bk8,ch1, 143.

²² *ibid*, 143.

²³ *ibid*, 1155b, bk8, ch2, 145.

²⁴ *ibid*, 1156a, bk8, ch3, 145.

²⁵ *ibid*, 1159b, bk8, ch8, 153.

²⁶ *ibid*, 1158a-b, bk8 ch6, 151.

Renaissance.²⁷ Petrarch, the emblematic figure of humanism, called Cicero “the great genius.”²⁸ Bruni, two generations later, described him as the man “who carried philosophy from Greece to Italy and nourished it with the golden river of his eloquence.”²⁹ Without any question Cicero’s view on friendship was considerably shaped by the Aristotelian approach, still it is the role of Cicero’s *De Amicitia* and the value system it represents that seems to be particularly interesting in connection with the application of the vocabulary of friendship in the Renaissance and the early seventeenth century. This pure panegyric on the noblest human feeling appears to have supplied the discourse on the relations both on the individual and on the interstate level with a terminology and a worldview behind. It was applied to a considerable degree both in theory and in practice.

When talking about civil power Vitoria quoted from *De Amicitia* four times in a row. First he cited Cicero describing amity “which we use on more occasions than fire and water themselves,”³⁰ then to emphasize that “nature abhors all solitary things,”³¹ for the third time to support his argument about the insupportable character of loneliness and the central role of a friend in life which Cicero described with the image of a man “who were to climb the skies and behold the workings of heaven and the beauty of the stars, [still] the awe-inspiring sight would lack savour without a friend to share it.”³² Finally Vitoria emphasized, again with reference to Cicero, the inhuman and perverse nature of those who cut themselves off from the companionship

²⁷ Langer, *Perfect Friendship*, 47-48.

²⁸ Skinner, Quentin. *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought* Vol. 1. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990) 84.

²⁹ *ibid*, 89.

³⁰ Vitoria, *Political Writings*, 8.

³¹ *ibid*, 8.

³² *ibid*, 8.

of men.³³ These quotations and references stressed the social (psychological) need for fellowship, rather than the role of some material attraction or interest.

The fact that Vitoria used *De Amicitia* as a central authority to support his argument when describing the characteristics of the sociability of human beings is a direct indicator of the enormous influence of Cicero in general and this work in particular in the period. In order to better understand the extent to which *De Amicitia* shaped the terminology describing friendship among individuals and states, let me summarize its main points.

Cicero's work on friendship calls to prefer friendship to all things else within human life,³⁴ which clearly displays its outstanding role in the life of men. In his opinion friendship is a basic experience, which is completely founded on natural grounds. The order of Nature prescribes that men incline to have benevolent relationship with each other, which is the source of friendship rather than their being dependent on each other and need of aid.³⁵ Cicero's account of the motivations behind men's friendship attributed less role to need and more to the feeling of love, which is so natural that it can be detected even among certain animals.³⁶ According to this scheme men are instinctively moved to live in peace and share the experience of fellowship. The natural feeling of fellowship forms a community out of mankind. Ties of various degrees of strength evolve among its members, such as being of the same family, the same village or nation. The more intimate the tie is the nearer people approach one another.³⁷

³³ *ibid.* 8.

³⁴ Cicero, Marcus Tullius. *De Senectute; De Amicitia; De Divinatione* (Loeb Classical Library. Cambridge, 1970) 131, vi. 20.

³⁵ Cicero, *De Amicitia*, 139, viii. 27.

³⁶ *ibid.*, 139, viii. 27.

³⁷ *ibid.*, 129, v. 19.

It is important to mark here, that in *De Amicitia* Cicero talks about the outstanding and unique form of friendship. He also acknowledges the common and moderate type of friendship, too, which yields, as Aristotle had outlined before him, to both pleasure and profit.³⁸ In contrast to these true friendship is considered to be much more than the mutually beneficial association of people. It arises from nature rather than need, that is from an inclination of the mind with a certain consciousness of love rather than from the calculation of the benefit to be derived from it.³⁹ Cicero outspokenly contradicts the Epicureans on this issue, in whose view friendships are formed for defense and help and they attribute no role to good-will and affection.⁴⁰ He claims that type of relationship cannot be regarded as true friendship, for the reasons Aristotle listed in his differentiation between the types of friendship: if it were utility that cemented the relationship, an altered aspect of utility would dissolve it, unlike true friendship, which is rooted in love and is built on the order of Nature deriving from it its unchangeable, eternal quality:⁴¹

“it seems to me that those who falsely assume expediency [utilitas] to be the basis of friendship, take from friendship’s chain its loveliest link. For it is not so much the material gain procured through a friend, as it is his love, and his love alone that gives us delight; and that advantage which we derive from him becomes a pleasure only when his service is inspired by an ardent zeal.”⁴²

True friendship represents the highest possible level of the feeling of fellowship and is regarded as its most perfect fulfillment. It precedes even kinship, since, as Cicero argues, goodwill may be taken away from kinship but not from friendship.⁴³ Perfect friendship is considered as an outstanding gift of Nature, the best

³⁸ *ibid*, 133, v.22.

³⁹ *ibid*, 145, ix. 32.

⁴⁰ *ibid*, 145, ix. 32.

⁴¹ *ibid*, 145, ix. 32.

⁴² *ibid*, 163, xiv.51.

⁴³ *ibid*, 129, v. 20.

and most beautiful furniture of human life,⁴⁴ also because it is well adapted to men's needs both in prosperous and in adverse circumstances.⁴⁵

It is a principle of Nature that true friendship can exist only between good men, who are irresistibly attracted to each other by the outstanding level of virtue present in their characters.⁴⁶ This secures true friendship its peculiar and exceptional character. Virtue serves as the key for it: "there is nothing more lovable than virtue, nothing which more surely wins affectionate regard" claims Laelius, the spokesman for Cicero, and continues "among the good toward the good there cannot be but mutual kind feeling, and in this we have a fountain of friendship established by nature."⁴⁷ Good people are virtuous and for this reason fit for true friendship. Since men in general aim at happiness in life, they are called to improve their own character first in order to become capable of participating in the joy of friendship:

"the fair thing is, first of all, to be a good man yourself, and then to seek another like yourself. It is among such men that this stability of friendship... may be made secure; and when united by ties of goodwill, they [the friends] will first of all subdue those passions to which other men are slaves; and next they will delight in what is equitable and accords with law, and will go to all lengths for each other; they will not demand of each other anything unless it is honorable and just, and they will not only cherish and love, but also revere, each other...Friendship was given to us by nature as the handmade of virtue, not as a comrade of vices; because virtue cannot attain her highest aims unattended, but only in union and fellowship with another...In such a partnership, I say, abide all things that men deem worthy of pursuit – honor and fame and delightful tranquility of mind; so that when these blessings are at hand life is happy, and without them it cannot be happy. Since happiness is our best and highest aim, we must, if we would attain it, give our attention to virtue, without which we can obtain neither friendship nor any other desirable thing."⁴⁸

The first attraction evolves into affection and love, which constantly dominate the relationship later on and form its eternal underpinning. Consequently, virtue emerges as the crucial factor in the formation of friendship since it both triggers and sustains it. From this it also follows that those, who are true friends, are virtuous and

⁴⁴ *ibid*, 127, v.18, 139, vii.26.

⁴⁵ *ibid*, 127, v. 18.

⁴⁶ *ibid*, 127, v.18, 131, vi. 20-21.

⁴⁷ *ibid*, 139, viii. 28.

⁴⁸ *ibid*, 189-191, xxii, 82-85.

vice-versa. For this reason nothing that contradicts virtue can find its way in true friendship, such as lies, flattery, or a request to depart from virtuous conduct for a friend's sake. All these are automatically excluded in true friendship thus dilemmas arising from the contradiction of the dictates of virtue and friendship should not even occur.⁴⁹

The affection and love that virtue generates serve as the emotional foundations and most visible signs of true friendship. They overwhelm the partners and are continuously expressed both verbally and in practice through mutual favors. The always present feelings are verbalized and the words love, affection, *amicitia* (which, as Cicero calls our attention to it, etymologically derives from *amor*)⁵⁰ are frequently repeated both when describing friendship in general and when Laelius is depicting his friendship with Scipio. Friends are to each other as brother to brother, and the presence of emotion is regarded, as the rhetorical question of Laelius reveals, as the appearance of a most human characteristic: “what would differentiate men from rocks if emotion is eliminated?” Without loving someone and being loved there is no good faith, no affection, but only perpetual suspicion and anxiety in one's life, like in the lives of tyrants.⁵¹

The presence of the emotions serves as an indicator of devotion, and on this basis true friendship can be easily distinguished from that type of association which is built on the intention to gain personal advantages out of it. Cicero claims that the latter type is more frequent among men, saying that most people do not recognize anything as good in human relations if it does not produce some benefit for them. As a result they cannot know what true friendship means, which is to be sought in itself and for

⁴⁹ *ibid.*, 151, xi.39.

⁵⁰ *ibid.*, 139, viii.26.

⁵¹ *ibid.*, 163, xv. 52.

its own sake.⁵² Their focus on utility leads to flattery and simulation which hinder the discernment of truth and thus are fatal to sincerity, without which friendship cannot exist.⁵³

Other than that the two types of relations could seem rather similar in their appearance. Cicero admits that friendship is always at hand and it guarantees the largest number of utilities (advantages).⁵⁴ Since its useful character is openly acknowledged, in its outlook it appears quite similar to the mutual help performed in the Epicurean type, only the motivations lying behind differ to a great extent. In true friendship favors are rendered spontaneously as expressions of the affection, where the actor's desire is to give rather than to gain anything else than the reinforcement of love in return. When Laelius describes his true friendship with Scipio he outlines the essence of their relationship:

“now what need did Africanus have of me? By Hercules! None at all. And I, assuredly, had no need of him either, but I loved him because of a certain admiration for his virtue, and he, in turn, loved me, because, it may be, of the fairly fair opinion which he had of my character; and close association added to our mutual affection. Although many and great advantages did ensue from our friendship, still the beginnings of our love did not spring from the hope of gain....so we believe that friendship is desirable, not because we are influenced by hope of gain, but because its entire profit [fructus] is in the love itself.”⁵⁵

The favors received strengthen the feeling of love towards the friend for whom it is the greatest revenue.⁵⁶ These acts accompany friendship, but they do not form its basis, they come after friendship has been already established not before. They give room for the active exercise of the zeal on the other's behalf,⁵⁷ the inexhaustible source of which is the constantly cherished emotional background. In true friendship a community of all benefits prevails to the extent that when life or reputation is at stake

⁵² *ibid*, 187-188, xxi. 79.

⁵³ *ibid*, 197-207, xxiv.89-xxvi. 100.

⁵⁴ *ibid*, 133.vii.23.

⁵⁵ *ibid*, 143, ix. 30-31.

⁵⁶ *ibid*, 145, ix. 32.

⁵⁷ *ibid*, 163, xiv. 51.

it is venial to deviate slightly from the perfectly straight course.⁵⁸ However, virtue should be by no means sacrificed to friendship, for its own sake as well as for the sake of reputation.⁵⁹

Friendship as a term appears to have been frequently applied already in the fourteenth century, a magnificent example for that is the way it interwove the social life of the Florentine republic. Richard Trexler's close analysis of the letters of two Florentines revealed how friendship was perceived at the turn of the fourteenth and fifteenth century in Florence. Beside the formal government a subgovernmental system of clientage existed. The discourse of the formal government maintained the outlook of equality among brothers in accordance with the idea of civic government; however, the real social statuses were defined by the patronage-clientage network. In this network, just like in formal government, men styled themselves each others' true *amici* and expressed their contempt for profit oriented friendship.⁶⁰ While in the formal government the idea of equal brothers was maintained, the patronage network combined equality with inequality. Friendship was thus frequently referred to both in equal and unequal relations. In the world of patronage friendship between acquaintances was officially established through a quasi formal contract from which date they regarded each other as friends and acted accordingly.⁶¹ The formal proffer and acceptance of friendship dictated the expression of strong feelings and resulted in the settlement of all disputes.⁶² Its complex character drew on the Antique heritage of the purest friendship on the one hand and the social reality on the other. In the rhetoric

⁵⁸ *ibid*, 171, xii.61, 175, xvii.65.

⁵⁹ *ibid*, 171, xvii. 61.

⁶⁰ Trexler, Richard C. *Public Life in Renaissance Florence*. (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), 27.

⁶¹ *ibid*, 135.

⁶² *ibid*, 145-146.

friends constantly assured each other about the love and affection they felt.⁶³ In practice friendship was maintained through mutual services. It is noteworthy that the services were not only offered but also openly asked for in the frame of friendship. Sealing the contract the new friend immediately asked for something and promised to use the other's possessions besides offering his own services.⁶⁴ The partners found it important to regularly emphasize their disinterested love⁶⁵ and called themselves a "servant from love."⁶⁶ The ritual discourse and the 'used' friendship constituted the essence of these relationships.⁶⁷ The networks of friends functioned as the building blocks of social discourse and of politics.⁶⁸

The system of patronage, though on a larger scale, characterized the courts of Europe in late Medieval times and throughout the Renaissance as well. As Lynne Magnusson demonstrates the terms *friendship* and *use* were joined in England to the extent that the frequency of demands from a friend was seen as a high degree of affection in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries.⁶⁹ It is important to remark that while the terminology builds on a specific worldview, in practice the meaning of the word *friend* in private usage did not necessarily confine itself to the intimate relationship Cicero described in *De Amicitia*. However, as David Konstan shows, the term friend was widely used even by Cicero in the field of politics, where it evidently lacked intimacy and emphasized the social role of friendship.⁷⁰ In his letters and speeches Cicero, as a *vir civilis*, underlined the role of the community of views and

⁶³ *ibid*, 136.

⁶⁴ *ibid*, 135.

⁶⁵ *ibid*, 151.

⁶⁶ *ibid*, 153.

⁶⁷ *ibid*, 136.

⁶⁸ *ibid*, 139.

⁶⁹ Magnusson, Lynne. *Shakespeare and Social Dialogue: Dramatic Language and Elizabethan Letters* (Cambridge, U.K.; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 82.

⁷⁰ Konstan, David. *Friendship in the Classical World Key Themes in Ancient History* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 128-129.

values as the basis of friendship. His statement that “friendships are acquired so that a common advantage may be driven by mutual services”⁷¹ emerges more in line with the pursuit of common political goals with the help of supporters. These supporters in public life could also be termed *allies*, just like Cicero called his associate in political life, Appius Pulcher, an ally (*socius*).⁷²

The wide use of the rhetoric of friendship in written communication was considerably promoted in the Republic of Letters by Erasmus’ book *On the Writing of Letters*. Closely drawing on Cicero’s letters, it advocated the application of the humanist epistolography that adopted the classical definition of a letter as conversation between absent friends.⁷³ Erasmus shows how to build up friendship and argue for its existence even among almost strangers, going through the phases described by Cicero from similarity of abilities and interests through affection and mutual kindnesses to the admiration of each other’s good qualities.⁷⁴ The terminology dominated as a generally applied stylistic repertoire later in the period as well. Affection and friendship remained the primary components of the vocabulary. They also appear in the letters of the Earl of Leicester from 1570s,⁷⁵ showing striking similarity to those produced by the diplomats fifty years later.

Lynne Magnusson refers to it as one of the three major interaction styles: humility and entreaty (applied by inferiors), pleasures and courtesy (applied by equals where the tropes connected to friendship dominate) and supposal and assurance

⁷¹ *ibid*, 130.

⁷² *ibid*, 131.

⁷³ Magnusson, *Shakespeare and Social Dialogue*, 63.

⁷⁴ *ibid*, 68.

⁷⁵ Adams, Simon. *Leicester and the Court: Essays on Elizabethan Politics*. (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002), 141-145.

(applied by superiors towards socially inferiors).⁷⁶ Due to the strict cultural requirement of composing the letters within these frames one can detect only little individuality in the application of the vocabulary. This feature also makes possible the examination of the language of friendship as a mirror of a value system seemingly professed and promoted by all the users.

The terminology presented in *De Amicitia*, *friendship*, *affection*, *love*, *zeal* and *virtue*, became (or rather remained) an inseparable building block of the discourse on human relationships by the early seventeenth century. The way these words appear in use leaves no doubt about their Ciceronian roots. They are clearly recognizable in both the private and public correspondence of the ambassadors, too. A good example for the former one is a letter sent by the English resident to a private acquaintance of his with the following introductory words: “My Lord, I had rather your lordship should say, you had received from me a fruitless and empty letter, then that my silence should give you cause to think that I have forgotten both your favors and your virtues, which equally bind me to love you.”⁷⁷ At another time he thanked the state secretary for “the affectionate sense you have expressed of our safe arrival.”⁷⁸

The practice that strangers would call each other friends was not suggested by *De Amicitia*, but, as it has been discussed, through Erasmus’ work and social practice it became an accepted type of conduct provided some conditions were fulfilled. When Sir Dudley Carleton, resident ambassador of England at The Hague initiated correspondence with Roe whom he had not met before, he was already talking about friendship: “I have had it long in my thoughts, and was often setting pen to paper...to

⁷⁶ Magnusson, *Shakespeare and Social Dialogue*, 88.

⁷⁷ Roe, Sir Thomas. *Negotiations of Sir Thomas Roe, in His Embassy to the Ottoman Porte, from the Year 1621 to 1628*. (London: Printed by Samuel Richardson at the expense of the Society for the Encouragement of Learning, 1740), 54.

⁷⁸ *ibid*, 55.

invite your lordship to that correspondence betwixt vs, (as well in regard of our publique charge, as privat frendship) in which you have prevented me by your letters.”⁷⁹ Similarly, Roe talked about *love*, the constant companion of friendship, in his letter to Sir Isaac Wake, resident ambassador of England to Venice: “though I am a stranger to you, I am not so to your life and actions; but one that loues and honors you without adulation.”⁸⁰

These examples unambiguously show that the term *friend* and the words *love* and *affection* (together with their derivatives) were also applied in situations where they evidently lacked their original meaning. Still, in both cases the application of this language drew on the Ciceronian image. In my understanding Carleton assumed, in harmony with Erasmus’ view, that friendship can easily be established and claimed among equals, and basically invited Roe to that. As far as Wake was concerned, beside the same linkage among equals Roe applied the rhetoric of virtue, the classic trigger of affectionate friendship, claiming that he had had some knowledge of Wake’s life and actions, which served as the basis for his love and honor, implying that Wake’s mode of conduct was virtuous enough to earn Roe’s love without personal acquaintance.

Looking at the closing lines of the English letters, one finds that the terminology overwhelm them. “I remain your lordship’s very loving frende” writes the Archbishop of Canterbury to Roe;⁸¹ “your verie affectionat frend, Elizabeth”, finishes her letters to Roe the daughter of James I.⁸² Beside *friend*, other basic components of the vocabulary of friendship present in Cicero’s work also emerge. In

⁷⁹ *ibid*, 69.

⁸⁰ *ibid*, 496.

⁸¹ *ibid*, 172.

⁸² *ibid*, 222.

Cicero's system *favors* are rendered by friends for the benefit of the other, without an eye on the possible advantages that might derive from those acts for the actor himself. In the concluding lines of letters, one frequently reads "Your lordships, most affectionately, to do you service,"⁸³ "Your lordships affectionate friend to serve you,"⁸⁴ "Your Lordshipps assured freind, to do you service"⁸⁵ and so on.

The assumption, that the usage of these expressions can be attributed solely to the formalities of letter writing (in which salutations and farewells always held a special place) without any other role than meeting the conventional stylistic requirements, dissolves when the very same utterances appear within the body of the texts, closely connected to the actual substance of the letters. This phenomenon depicts the vivid, general and exclusive character of the vocabulary as part of the everyday language, where the content of the letter had to be verbalized within the frame of the given vocabulary and the same vocabulary could convey meanings varying from commonplace usage to true substance. In certain cases the terminology did convey its original meaning and the sincerity of the letter writer was unquestionable. For instance there can be no question about Roe's truthful devotion to Elizabeth that made him express his "humble desire to doe your Majestie some acceptable service."⁸⁶ His main personal goal during his employment in Constantinople was to support the case of Frederick, Elizabeth's husband, to bring about his restitution, this way trying to secure for Elizabeth a peaceful and honorable life that suits her dignity. His devotion was not only claimed by himself and testified by the considerable efforts he made in order to improve the chances of Frederick V and his supporters on the battlefield, but it was also acknowledged by the bailo, who

⁸³ *ibid*, 346.

⁸⁴ *ibid*, 463.

⁸⁵ *ibid*, 190.

⁸⁶ *ibid*, 312.

informed his superiors that the English ambassador was “much devoted to the Palatine.”⁸⁷ The quotation comes from 1624, when Roe’s hands were still bound by his superiors and for this reason could not perform those acts, namely the encouragement of Gábor Bethlen, Prince of Transylvania, to attack the Emperor, which could have considerably ameliorated Elizabeth’s situation in his judgment.

Very similarly to the social practice described by Trexler and Magnusson, friends constituted groups, bound together by political or economic ties. In a letter written to the Lord of Arundel Roe reveals that the offices of friendship were not performed irrespectively of any worthy men, they were bestowed on those only who were members of the network of friends. On the other hand these offices could be expanded to anyone, if that person had the reference of someone who was already within the circle: “I know the worth of Mr. Markham, now our consull, soe well, that I should wrong my selfe if in all things I gaue him not his due: butt beeing recommended as one your lordship respects, it shall oblige mee to all particular offices of friendship.”⁸⁸ The circle could also be expanded by a service performed to a member of another circle. Roe asked a personal favor of Carleton for his nephew and in return he offered not only his services, but also that of the friends of his nephew:

“I haue been twice a suiter to your lordship for a young nephew of myne...he hath many able friends, that will be thankfull to your lordship, if you will vouchsafe him a countenance; and though I may boldly offer my seruice here, where I am out of the way, yett I will as willingly and heartily giue your lordship reall demonstration of my entire affection.”⁸⁹

With the pattern of the closed circle of friends bound by love and mutual services the image of Ciceronian true friendship is imitated. The perceived fulfillment

⁸⁷ Óváry, Lipót ed. *Oklevéltár Bethlen Gábor Diplomáciai Összeköttetései Történetéhez* [Documents Related to the History of the Diplomatic Connections of Gabor Bethlen]: (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1886), 538. molto devoto al Palatino

⁸⁸ Roe, *Negotiations*, 154.

⁸⁹ *ibid*, 222.

of this image endowed the members of this circle with two implicit moral benefits: first that in the realization of the Ciceronian ideal they could look upon themselves and each other as civilized men of the highest degree. Secondly, based on the axiom that true friendship exists only among virtuous people, they could regard themselves as virtuous. It is important to emphasize that, although these utterances of friendship are used on a wide scale with far from equal emotional content, they had not become empty rhetoric, but convey at least a minimum message: the benevolent intention of the speaker towards the addressee and the constant reinforcement of mutual good will and reliability.

The dispatches of the bailos were all addressed to the Signoria and were written in a manner that excluded personal overtone. The French ambassadors' letters I had a chance to read were also of the official sort. For this reason no data could be gathered from them regarding the language of friendship and affections in the interpersonal sphere.

Friendship in Interstate Relations

Concerning its origin no doubt the expression *friend* had been in use since the earliest times in history to depict relationship between rulers.⁹⁰ In ancient Greece this word dominated the language describing relations with other states⁹¹ and it has been kept alive ever since. In the writings of Vitoria, Suarez and Gentili we found that the sociability of individuals constituted the primary motivation for the organization of human communities, and it also served as the foundation of the community of states. Similarly to individuals states also formed a community, a universal community as

⁹⁰ I found the earliest examples in the so called El Amarna letters, that date from the 14th century BC. In CIAS Encyclopedia of the El Amarna letters: <http://www.specialtyinterests.net/eae.html#6> (accessed March 20 2011)

⁹¹ Konstan, *Friendship in the Classical World*, 83-84.

Suarez termed it. Although states were regarded as self-sufficient entities when examined from within, their interdependency and reliance on each other came in the front by the seventeenth century. The lack of total self-sufficiency presented itself as the main shaping force behind the relations of states, and expediency emerged as the primary organizing factor. Beside sociability *assistance* and *need* appeared in the theoretical literature as the key words explaining why states needed to be members of the universal community. The analogy with the relationships among individuals stopped here for the theorists; they did not speak about love or affection among states/princes or their representatives. From all the possible forces that can trigger friendship only utility prevailed, the mutual satisfaction of needs. Randall Lesaffer, who closely studied the concept of *amicitia* in Renaissance peace treaties, and confined his research mainly to the texts of treaties and manifestos as sources, also states that the concept of friendship in interstate relations was applied as a juridical concept and it can be only slightly connected to Cicero's *De Amicitia*:

"Inasmuch as it is the expression of the sole existence of peaceful and international relations, the vicinity to the quote [De amicitia omnes ad unum idem sentiunt...sine amicitia vitam esse nullam] of Cicero stands. On the other hand, the ciceronian argument that friendship and virtue are inseparable could hardly be applied to interstate friendship. To Cicero benevolence was the essence of friendship. His definition of private friendship approaches the concept of interstate friendship: benevolence as the expression of a vague and flexible mutual willingness to develop relations that are advantageous to all parties concerned."⁹²

However the letters of the ambassadors contradict Lesaffer's statement. The application of the term *friend* and the words associated with it and listed above dominated the vocabulary of interstate relations and could be defined as pillars of its language. Virtue and friendship did appear inseparable in interstate relations, and, as we have seen, benevolence was not equivalent in Cicero's work with mutual advantages. The terminology used for public purposes and in interstate relations was

⁹² Lesaffer, Randall. "Amicitia in Renaissance Peace and Alliance Treaties (1450-1530)." *Journal of the History of International Law*, no. 4 (2002): 77-99, 77.

clearly identical with the one applied in private correspondence. In the vast majority of cases another state, after some contact had already been established, was either considered a friend or an enemy, especially in a war period.⁹³ If a state was regarded a friend expressions of friendship, love, affection and respect for valor frequently characterized the discourse towards it.

The theorists advocated a view of the community of states as a purely secular phenomenon, without any religious considerations. Already Vitoria, the earliest of the theorists mentioned stated that non-Christians have as legitimate rulers as Christian subjects⁹⁴ and outlined the equal status of the Ottoman Empire from this respect. In practice this process had resulted in an astonishing, but logical outcome: the Ottoman Empire, once called the *hostis naturalis*, regularly received and returned the verbal expressions of friendship by Christian states. These cases did not show any difference from those occasions when Christian states addressed each other. The Venetian resident in London reported that “the King also wrote to the same Gabor assuring him of his affection excusing the delay”⁹⁵ whereas Bethlen expressed himself in the same manner towards Venice: “We have always had the aim to demonstrate...to the Serenissima Republica Our constant affection and singular desire to do her benefit in every necessity.”⁹⁶ The Sultan in his letter to the confederated princes talked about the “love and affection that you have displayed to our Sublime Porte,”⁹⁷ and in general called the anti-Imperialist states and princes its friends. Even if the translators might

⁹³ The term *neutrality* was already present in the language, but quite rarely applied, and then designated the disposition of a state-ruler for not taking side in a quarrel between two other states. Such an occasion is when Roe writes to Bethlen about the elector of Saxe who has altered to neutrality from being supportive to the Emperor. Roe, *Negotiations*, 352.

⁹⁴ Vitoria, *Political Writings*, 18.

⁹⁵ Öváry, 805. Al medesimo Gabor pure scrive il Re assicurandolo della sua affectione, escusando il ritardo

⁹⁶ *ibid*, 566. Havendo Noi sempre havuto fine di dimostrare, potendo, alla Serenissima Repubblica il Nostro costante affetto et singolar desiderio di giovarle in ogni occorrenza

⁹⁷ *ibid*, 656. amore et affettione che havete esposto alla nostra Eccelsa Porta

have had a hand in the verbalization of the text, the fact that they and their audience found it appropriate and of natural sounding shows that the Ottoman Empire appeared as simply one of the states to which the same system was applicable.

Obviously, the term *friend* and the cluster of words around it used for the description of the relationship among states could not keep an intimate meaning; however, its usage is indistinguishable from the style present in inter-personal relations. The words and their frequency of appearance are the same. The sources do not supply us with any evidence for the distinction between the words *amity* and *friendship* proposed by Evgeny Roshchin who stated that *amity* was the word used to describe friendly relations with strangers and *friendship* applied for the description of private relations. On that basis he even claimed the text of Locke's *Two Treatises of Government* being unconventional in its exclusive application of the term *friendship* for the public sphere.⁹⁸ The language use of the diplomatic correspondence this research is based upon contradicts Roshchin, as they reveal Locke's usage was not unconventional in the period.

Beside its clear rhetorical role, *friend* also conveyed concrete meanings, taking up a number of associations. In most of the cases, especially during peaceful periods, its function was simply the mutual reinforcement of the already existing peaceful relationship. The officials at the Porte expressed their dissatisfaction to Roe that no letter of "renovation" of the amity had arrived for a long time from England,⁹⁹ despite the fact that Charles I had occupied the throne almost a year before. England constituted no danger to the Ottoman Empire, still in case of a new king the

⁹⁸ Roshchin, Evgeny. "The Concept of Friendship: From Princes to States" *European Journal of International Relations* vol. 12, no 4 (2006), 599-624, 618. He even claimed that "the instance also introduces an ethical dimension into political friendship which would later allow for the statements on the impossibility of friendship among states."

⁹⁹ Roe, *Negotiations*, 486.

confirmation of friendship was expected to keep it alive. With reference to this friendship Roe could help the case of English merchants in their struggle against the pirates in the Mediterranean Sea as he managed to procure “strong commands for our quiett trade and passage in the sea, as they [the Ottoman officials in Algiers and Tunis] were subjects and wee frends to this Porte.”¹⁰⁰ This quotation reveals that the subjects of states who proclaimed to be the friends of each other were also required to act in a peaceful manner. Randall Lesaffer found that this principle was included as a stipulation in many peace and alliance treaties.¹⁰¹ He ascribed a juridical content to *friendship* among states as more than peace, namely benevolent neutrality and the exclusion of hostile acts towards each other.¹⁰² He acknowledged that the concept of friendship was broad,¹⁰³ but could not dwell into the enumeration of its possible meanings, studying only the texts of peace and alliance treaties. Fortunately, the letters, especially the detailed reports of the English resident, supply us with more insight into this question.

The minimum meaning associated with the term *friend* is the expression of not being hostile towards the other state and the intention to preserve peace with it, without the tone of any benevolence. In this function the establishment of friendship meant the settlement of disputes, a primary act connected to the establishment of Renaissance friendships. A good example for that is Roe’s opinion about the outcome of the treaties at the end of the Polish-Ottoman war in 1622: “sure I am, they wilbe frends vpon any conditions, the Poles hauing declared warr to the Muscouite, and in arms against the king of Swethland.”¹⁰⁴ The same meaning, that is the intention to

¹⁰⁰ *ibid*, 112.

¹⁰¹ Lesaffer, *Amicitia in Renaissance Peace and Alliance Treaties (1450-1530)*, 91.

¹⁰² *ibid*, 80.

¹⁰³ *ibid*, 85.

¹⁰⁴ Roe, *Negotiations*, 68.

maintain peaceful conditions, is applied in Roe's use of the term when he related the debate between him and the bailo, the resident ambassador of Venice, over a commercial controversy: "I first vsed the meanes of frendshipp with the bailo, to end all disputes without noise."¹⁰⁵

The second layer of meaning covers the benevolent disposition on top of peaceful intentions; this is the meaning Lesaffer also identified. Shortly after his arrival in Constantinople the English resident gained a reputation at the Porte for his wise and sober thinking. Occasionally the grand vizier and other officials consulted with him about issues related to the affairs in Christendom, and asked for his opinion. When Roe gave an account of such a discussion in which he had shown the Turkish officials why certain decisions would be disadvantageous to the Ottoman Empire, he outlined that both the vizier and the chancellor thanked him for sharing with them his thoughts "sayeing I spake like a true frend."¹⁰⁶

The third sense in which the word friend was understood conveyed the meaning that one state stood on the same side with the other in a controversy. The foreign policy of Gábor Bethlen, determined by Transylvania's being wedged between two empires, paid special attention to not being left without possible allies. In Roe's interpretation the prince was in a vulnerable situation and "in all his wayes he hath only sought out some on whom to relye."¹⁰⁷ Due to the slow determination process of the Protestant states to seriously take into consideration the Prince of Transylvania as a possible means for diversion, Roe worried that finally he might side with the Emperor. Following Bethlen's attack against Ferdinand in 1623 negotiations began about the peace treaty, which, if completed, would have meant that the opportunity of

¹⁰⁵ *ibid*, 449.

¹⁰⁶ *ibid*, 87.

¹⁰⁷ *ibid*, 238-239.

diversion ceased, at least in Roe's opinion. In his letter written to Elizabeth he argued for the importance of changing the views of the Protestant princes in order "to redeeme him [Bethlen] from the neglect that hath almost lost him and enforced him to by-wayes to seeke frends."¹⁰⁸ When in 1625 the Emperor initiated peace negotiations with the Porte, Césy, the French resident, interpreted this move as a trick and contrasted it to the true friendship of the anti-Imperialists and the Porte: "the emperor desired to treat with the Grand Signor not because of friendship but to gain time and prevent that the Prince of Transylvania take arms against him so that the said Emperor can turn all his forces against the friends of this Porte."¹⁰⁹

The fourth sense of the term referred to an even closer relationship, that of the active supporter. From the moment the English resident arrived in Constantinople the Prince of Transylvania constantly expressed his desire to establish a close diplomatic relationship with him and gain his active support,¹¹⁰ but Roe's instructions initially called him to resist and ignore these moves. Nevertheless, the ambassador of the prince of Transylvania informed him that he had "had audience from the vizier, who complayned that I had neuer visited him since his hauing the seal [becoming the vizier], nor taken knowledge of him; whereby I collected, he [Bethlen's ambassador] had mentioned mee to the vizier, as a frend to his business."¹¹¹ Another example for the meaning of friend as an active supporter is Roe's speculation about the plans of Bethlen in November 1623: "the truth is; hee hath gotten a great advantage vppon the emperour, which hee may vse to his honour, and the profitt of his frends [the

¹⁰⁸ *ibid*, 312.

¹⁰⁹ BnF F 1650, 407v. Lempr desiroit de traiter avec le grand Sgr non par amitié mays pour gaygner temps et empecher que le prince de Transilvanie ne prenne les armes contre luy affin que ledit Empr puyse tourner toutes ces forces contre les amys de cette porte

¹¹⁰ Roe, *Negotiations*, 81.

¹¹¹ *ibid*, 81.

protestant states].”¹¹² Also, in September 1626 the Caimacam informed Césy that the English and the Dutch ambassadors asked him “that the Grand Signor support the arms of the friends of this Porte by the means of a big army at the borders of the Emperor and by not treating peace with him until the affairs of Germany are not in the state of satisfying the friends of this Porte.”¹¹³

At the Porte the anti-Imperialist princes and states were generally referred to as the friends of the Porte. Césy reported in September 1625 that the sultan ordered Bethlen in writing “to arm [himself] with the friends of this porte against the house of Austria”¹¹⁴ and we can see the translation of the letter itself as the bailo included it in his dispatch:

“those...of the religion different from the Muslim, loyally come to find shelter under our wings, are in every manner covered by our Imperial shadow and are always honored and respected; in conformity with it are the Kings of France and England, the duke of Venice, and the Lords of Flanders, who, since the happy time of our magnanimous ancestors have conserved perfect friendship and excellent correspondence with our Sublime Porte, cherished by its friends. By virtue of your faithful sincerity and affectionate adherence towards our Happy Porte, desiring that you also with all love and affection be unanimous and in concord with them...have yourself to be in affection and in friendship with the mentioned princes, and in necessity inform them, and be in agreement and united with them. And so united according to my magnificent order, for which this our present Imperial letter be it accompanied by happiness is issued...at the arrival of which you have to, in accordance with your sincerity towards our Happy Porte, with the mentioned princes, our ancient friends, also be in friendship and affection, and in all the negotiations demonstrate concord and unity with them and in necessity give them aid and assistance, using all terms of friendship.”¹¹⁵

¹¹² *ibid.*, 192.

¹¹³ BnF F 1650, 574r. que le grand Sgr...de fauoriser les armes des amys de cette porte par le moyen dune grande armée sur les frontieres de Lempr, et de ne traitter la paix avec luy que les affayres dalemagne ne soient en estat de contenter les amys de cette Porte

¹¹⁴ *ibid.*, 405r. l'armer avec les amys de cette porte contre la mason D'austrie

¹¹⁵ Óváry, 593-594, quelli...di Religione diversa dalla Musulmana, con lealta vengono a ricorrarsi sotto le nostre ale, sono per ogni verso dalla nostra Imperial ombra coperti, et sempre honorati et rispettati; conforme a che li Re di Franza et Inghilterra, il Duce di Venetia, et li Signori di Fiandra, come quelli, che dal felice tempo de' magnanimi nostri progenitori conservano perfetta amicitia et ottima corrispondenza con la nostra Eccelsa Porta, accarezzatrice delli suoi amici. In virtu pero della leal sincerita et affettuosa aderenza vostra verso della nostra felice Porta, desiderandosi che ancor voi con ogni amor et affetto siate unanime et concorde con essi loro...habbate voi ad esser in affetione et amicitia con li predetti Principi, et nell'occorrenze avvisarli, et esser d'accordo et unito con loro. E percio unito il mio eccelso ordine, in virtu del quale s'e estesa la presente nostra Imperial lettera...all'arrivo della quale doverete in conformita della sincerita vostra verso la nostra felice Porta con li predetti Principi, nostri antichi amici, voi ancora esser in amicitia et affetione, et in tutti li negotii esser d'accordo et unito con essi loro, et...nell'occorrenze loro darete aiuto et soccorso, usando ogni termine di vera amicitia.

In the Venetian papers the contrary process, namely to stop being supportive is expressed through the image of leaving friendship. The bailo, Zorzi, and the extraordinary ambassador of Venice, Contarini, together encouraged the Transylvanian ambassador in connection with his negotiations with the Ottoman officials “aiming to detach the prince from the friendship of the Emperor and take arms again.”¹¹⁶ The resident of Venice in London informed his superiors in October 1626 that Tilly, the general of one of Ferdinand’s armies, sent his conditions to the King of Denmark for a possible agreement among which “he had to completely withdraw from the friendship of France, England, the States and Gabor [Bethlen].”¹¹⁷

The fifth sense of the term *friend* closely approached the one which denoted an officially agreed alliance between states. In these cases *friends* and *allies* are interchangeable and appear frequently together. After Bethlen joined the Treaty of Westminster, the terminology among the new allies did not change. We find that the use of the word *allies* did not strictly confine itself to the officially formed alliances. In a great number of cases it served as a synonym of this last sense of friend, in line with the Ciceronian usage in the sphere of politics. The ambassador of the Prince of Transylvania explained his master’s decision to make peace with the Emperor with some reproach, saying the previous year the prince actively fought against Ferdinand, “but that he had no helpe, not so much as an ambassador or a letter, from his *allyes*.”¹¹⁸ The letter dates from May 1624, when Bethlen was not even acknowledged as a potential ally in the war by the Protestant party. Neither did the word necessarily have reference to a military alliance as the following example shows. Among the great turbulences in the Ottoman Empire the grand vizier approached all the four Western

¹¹⁶ *ibid.*, 562, mirando il Principe a distaccarsi dall’amicitia dell’Imperatore et ripigliar l’armi

¹¹⁷ *ibid.*, 800, egli dovesse intieramente ritirarsi dall’amicitia di Francia Inghilterra Stati e Gabor

¹¹⁸ Roe, *Negotiations*, 239.

ambassadors, “as the frends and allyes of this port”¹¹⁹ to borrow 30000 chequin.¹²⁰ Although the western ambassadors represented states that were officially friends of the Ottoman Empire, they definitely did not sign documents of alliance with her. It is important to remark that Lesaffer also describes the phenomenon of the occasional interchangeability of the words *alliance* and *friendship* or *ally* and *friend*. He, from his judicial point of view, calls it a terminological confusion.¹²¹ Despite the fact that he differentiates between a judicial and a political usage it is a question to what extent these categories existed in the minds of the contemporaries. The sources suggest that a term or expression could take up a number of concrete meanings and the boundaries of them were blurred. There seems to be no intention to pair the terms with exact and narrow definitions. To investigate the reason behind this phenomenon is not the aim of this study; I only wish to stress its existence in order to question Lesaffer’s statement about friends and allies as confused legal concepts in interstate relations in the period.

Friend also emerged in the clause inserted in official documents: “friend to friend and enemy to enemy.” This expression had long been established in interstate relations, it appeared for example in a diplomatic letter from 1543 in connection with the relationship between England and France.¹²² Lesaffer informs us in a footnote that the clause “was a topos used in alliance treaties that dated from ancient Greek practice.”¹²³ However, in the sources it is connected to simple peace treaties, without any official or even informal intention to conclude an alliance. Similarly to the word *ally* it did not have a generally clearly defined content. When the English resident

¹¹⁹ *ibid*, 180.

¹²⁰ or zecchino, coin of the Venetian Republic

¹²¹ Lesaffer, *Amicitia in Renaissance Peace and Alliance Treaties (1450-1530)*, 80.

¹²² Sadler, Ralph (Clifford, Arthur and Scott, Walter eds). *The State Papers and Letters of Sir Ralph Sadler, Ed. By A. Clifford. To Which Is Added, a Memoir of the Life of Sir Ralph Sadler, by W. Scott.* (Edinburgh, 1809), 171.

¹²³ Lesaffer, *Amicitia in Renaissance Peace and Alliance Treaties (1450-1530)*, 9.3 footnote 58.

played the role of the mediator in the Polish-Ottoman peace negotiations mentioned above, he gave account of the problem that arose from the difference in the interpretation of this clause. He related that the Turks would have explained it for mutual and actual aid in war begun by either party, as a league offensive and defensive, so they would have meant the fifth sense of friend, which conveyed the strongest bond. However, Roe and the Polish party moderated it to the second sense, namely that they should stay in peace and nourish a benevolent disposition towards the other, which would consequently result in the expectation that neither should assist the enemies of the other. The officials at the Porte were not satisfied with the suggested content and still aimed at reaching more, in vain:

“This againe the bassa would haue enlarged by naming the king of Spaine, emperour, etc...But wee showed them That were to separate the kingdome of Poland from the community of Christendome, and to expose it to enuy and reproach, perhaps into a warre in which the grand signior must by the same article bee engaged. And to bee present or consent to such a scandall I utterly refused.”¹²⁴

The same clause, *friend to friend and enemy to enemy*, was the subject of debate between the Emperor’s ambassador and the Porte, too. The ambassador complained about the Porte giving aid to Gábor Bethlen against Ferdinand and straightly informed the vizier about the strict condition of the Emperor if the Porte wished to maintain the peace:

“either Bethlem Gabor and his succours should bee recalled or left alone to his owne quarrell, according to the clause, Frend to frend and enemy to enemy; which, if the grand signor would not graunt, nor maynteyne the treaty, that hee should declare, that the emperor had done what did become him, to maynteyne the peace and was of his oath free before God and man.”¹²⁵

In this case it is difficult to fit the clause *friend to friend and enemy to enemy* to the actual circumstances in which it was uttered. Bethlen was the head of a tributary state of the Porte, even if he managed to achieve a considerably better treatment than

¹²⁴ Roe, *Negotiations*, 120-121.

¹²⁵ *ibid*, 202.

the two other principalities, Wallachia and Moldavia. The prince was free to pursue his own foreign policy as long as it was approved by the Porte and it was the decision of the Grand Signor whether he sent support or not in case of a war waged by the prince. As we can read in the quotation the real intention of the Emperor's ambassador was to achieve that the prince either be recalled (as a vassal) or left alone (as independent from the Porte) in which case, despite his affiliation with the Ottoman Empire, his actions would not be considered as related to the Porte. This was completely in agreement with the content of the treaty between the Porte and the Emperor, which said if a quarrel occurs between the Prince of Transylvania and the Emperor, the Porte should leave it to them to end it. Only if a third party was brought in by the Emperor to conquer Transylvania or to trouble the provinces, then "the peace is considered to be broken on his part, and the grand signor is bound to maynteyne his allies."¹²⁶

In short what the Emperor's ambassador asked of the Grand Signor was that the Ottoman Empire did not get involved in Bethlen's attacks against the Emperor. So, if we take it word by word, the first part of the clause has no relevance here at all, and the second is also irrelevant, due to the fact that the Porte cannot and would not be the enemy of one of its tributary states. It is imaginable that it could become hostile with the prince himself and depose him, but, on the one hand, that idea did not emerge even from the imperial side, on the other the clause was used only at interstate level and not at a person – state level. This distinction was in line with Gentili's statement that the terms *war* and *enemy* implied equality, this way they could be used in connection with states only.¹²⁷

¹²⁶ *ibid*, 86.

¹²⁷ Gentili, *De iure belli libri tres*, 25.

All in all it appears that the only function of the reference to the clause itself in relationships between the Ottoman Empire and a Christian state by the Christian party is the intention to emphasize the significance of the existence of the treaty and the requirement of a friendly, that is peaceful behavior from the Sultan's part which corresponds to the meaning of the clause in the preceding example: neither party should assist the other's enemies, which is identical with the minimal meaning of *friend* mentioned above.

The third occasion when the clause appeared in the reports happened in May 1627. At that time still nobody knew for certain whether Bethlen made peace with the Emperor or not, and, if yes, on what conditions. In that situation

“the emperors agent, (to what end is not hard to penetrate)...doth on the contrarye cunningly accuse Gabor to these ministers, that he hath bound himselfe to be friend to friends, and enemy to the enemyes of the house of Austria. This is taken ill on all parts. The vizier complaynes of it as a rebellion; and the Transylvanian agent, that it is maliciously spread, and without truth, to sowe dissention and suspition, and to separate his master from the protection of the port.”¹²⁸

The indignation of the vizier confined itself strictly to the application of the term itself, and not the fact that Bethlen made peace. The Porte itself was desperate to make its own peace with the Emperor at that time. The vizier's reaction might have had two reasons: one that the inclusion of this clause in a treaty could happen only in case of sovereign parties, so Bethlen would have declared his independence from the Ottoman Empire, if he had really agreed to insert that clause. The other reason, interlinked with the first one, that in the interpretation of the Porte, the prince would have bound himself to attack the Ottoman Empire as the friend of the Emperor, if the situation arose.

¹²⁸ Roe, *Negotiations*, 645-646.

Comparing the three appearances of the clause the difference between the relevance attributed to its application by the Ottoman Empire and the Christian states becomes apparent. The former tended to take it seriously word by word, while the latter saw it more like a formality. The same difference in approach comes to light during the discussion between the grand vizier and the Dutch and the English ambassadors in November 1627 about the peace treaty between the Porte and the Emperor. The residents' goal was to assure that the Porte does not conclude peace without the inclusion of the anti-Imperialist kings and princes as well as the count Palatine:

"I haue this day, accompanied with the Dutch ambassador, done the office with the vizier, and pressed the grand signors promise giuen me, not to conclude peace with the emperor without the comprehension of the kyngs and princes friends of the port... with as much feruor and protestation, as the cause doth require. To which he answered, That there was a clause in the treatye, including in generall termes *amicos omnes*, and that therin we were as much respected as the prince of Transilvania, whose name in particular was not inserted. We replied, That was artifice of the Imperialls, and to no effect; for those generall wordes did not bynd in the style of treatyes in Christendome, but were by them admitted pro forma, without rigor."¹²⁹

The bailo also reported on this issue, describing the account of the English resident of his discussion with the Caimacam related to the matter. He narrated the conversation, in which the Caimacam said that the imperials opposed to name anyone in the treaty

"saying that it is enough to name in general, which included him [Bethlen] and all the friends. He [Roe] answered that from this he could argue what the goals of the Imperialists are, which are the invasion of Gabor, because such generality of the inclusion of all is a formula which does not press anything."¹³⁰

In his dispatch Venier, then bailo, did not mention that the above statement was not true or he did not agree with Roe's argument, which means most probably he shared the same opinion about the relevance of the term *amicos omnes* in the treaties.

¹²⁹ Roe, *Negotiations*, 700.

¹³⁰ Óváry, 722, dicendo che bastava la nominatione generale, che include lui et tutti li amici. Replico che da questo si poteva argumentare li fini de Imperiali che erano d'invader Gabor, perche quella generalita d'includer tutti, e una formula che niente stringe.

Lesaffer describes the role of nominated allies in the peace treaties in the period, and suggests that nomination was necessary for the real inclusion in the treaty of the allies and friends,¹³¹ which is supported by the ambassadors' statement. It is a question whether the Ottoman officials were really ignorant about the emptiness of this phrase or they only pretended to be so and let the Emperor's agents convince them, in order to accomplish the peace as quickly and smoothly as possible, without openly admitting that they did not press for the inclusion of their friends. The residents were not suspicious in this aspect, which supports the first assumption, the ignorance of the officials about the little weight of the inserted expression in Western usage.

Even with these latter proofs of the formal character of certain expressions used in interstate relations containing the term friend, it is clear from the above-mentioned that the concept of friendship did convey relevant meanings on a number of occasions. Lesaffer states in connection with the frequent application of the term that "the phenomenon can be explained only with the need felt to continuously repeat the willingness to have peaceful relations"¹³² and "the all too frequent affirmation of the basic relation of *amicitia* prove that the crisis was more than a historian's construction."¹³³ He attributes the overwhelming application of *amicitia* in peace treaties to the intention to counterbalance a crisis, what is more, the absence of international law in the period, to use his own words, (as compared to the Middle Ages, when, according to him, the scarce application of *amicitia* was due to the presence of a solid international system under the leadership of the Pope or the Holy

¹³¹ Lesaffer, Randall. *Peace Treaties and International Law in European History: From the Late Middle Ages to World War One*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 88.

¹³² *ibid*, 37.

¹³³ *ibid*, 43.

Roman Emperor).¹³⁴ Roshchin identifies the reason behind the overwhelming application of the term in the special context of religious wars arguing that as long as during the Middle Ages the common religious and political order guaranteed a common ground,¹³⁵ later it arose out of need for

“the concept presupposed a potential for accommodating internal European otherness and strangeness which states or kings came to see in each other in a disorderly international environment. Perceiving the other as a potential friend could be a way out of religious massacres and could lay the foundation for a civilized interstate conduct.”¹³⁶

I argue that both explanations are mistaken. In my view the language of friendship was inherited from Antiquity, especially under the influence of Cicero, and revived in the Renaissance. The vocabulary of friendship applied in interstate relations incorporated the antique notion of *friendship* among states and drew on the interpersonal humanist discourse which the term dominated to the same extent and resulted in its extensive application characterizing even the early seventeenth century. What neither Lesaffer nor Roshchin could see in the peace treaties and political treatises was the variety of senses and the value system built on affections behind the usage that saturated the letters of the diplomatic correspondence of the period.

Expressions of Affection

As we have seen, the verbal expression of affection accompanied all statements of friendship as a rule in inter-personal correspondence. It was not less frequently applied at the interstate level, in case of both describing the attitudes of individuals and states. In some cases it appeared directly, from prince or state to prince or state. Thus Bethlen’s messenger, the count of Turn, told Roe about the “loue

¹³⁴ Lesaffer, Randall. “War, Peace and Interstate Friendship and the Emergence of the *Ius Publicum Europaeum*.” in Asch, Ronald G., Eckart, Wulf, and Wrede, Martin (Hg.) eds. *Frieden Und Krieg in Der Frühen Neuzeit. Die Europäische Staatenordnung Und Die Außereuropäische Welt* (München: W. Fink, 2001), 87-113, 108-09.

¹³⁵ Roshchin, *The Concept of Friendship*, 601.

¹³⁶ *ibid*, 610.

and zeale he [Bethlen] bare to the king of Bohemia,”¹³⁷ and, as the Venetian resident in London reported, “the King [of England] also wrote to him [Bethlen] to assure him of his affection.”¹³⁸ The bailo in Constantinople similarly assured Bethlen’s agent that the Serenissima Republica “nourishes much affection and goodwill towards the person of the prince because of the merit of his valor.”¹³⁹ Bethlen expressed his “affection towards the Illustrious States [of Holland],”¹⁴⁰ addressed the Dutch resident in his letter as “noble and generous gentleman affectionately and sincerely loved by us” and closed his letter writing “most affectionate Gabriel.”¹⁴¹ He applied the same style towards the bailo whom he termed “Our conjoined in love.”¹⁴² Beside princes and kings diplomats and statesmen also applied the term to describe their own or others’ attitude. Césy, as he reported, assured the Turkish officials of “the particular affection I have to the good of this Porte.”¹⁴³ The bailo described the bassa of Buda as “ben affetto” towards the Emperor¹⁴⁴, and the Caimacam as “ben afetto” towards Bethlen.¹⁴⁵

When the Turkish officials explained why they supported Bethlen actively against the Emperor in peace time (the *friend to friend enemy to enemy* clause discussed above arose in connection with this issue) the reason they put forward was that they had heard “many laments made to the port of the yll affections of the emperor.”¹⁴⁶ From this quotation it appears that not only the Christian princes applied the terminology towards each other and the Ottoman Empire, but the Porte also

¹³⁷ Roe, *Negotiations*, 81.

¹³⁸ Óváry, 804. scrive il Re assicurandolo della sua affectione

¹³⁹ *ibid*, 690. porta grande affetto et volonta alla persona del Principe, per il merito del suo valor

¹⁴⁰ *ibid*, 558. affettione verso gl’ Illustrissimi Stati

¹⁴¹ *ibid*, 557-558. Nobile et Generoso Signore affettuosamente et sinceramente da Noi amato... Affettuosissimo Gabriel

¹⁴² *ibid*, 567. Nostro congiunto in amore

¹⁴³ BnF F 1651, 161v. laffection particulliere que iay au bien de cette porte

¹⁴⁴ Óváry, 532.

¹⁴⁵ *ibid*, 619.

¹⁴⁶ Roe, *Negotiations*, 202.

utilized the rhetoric of friendship in its communication with the Christian princes and states. The question immediately arises: did the Turkish chancellery verbalize the letters sent to the Christian partners in this way or the phenomenon occurs as the outcome of the work of the translators, who fit the content of the letters to the conventional language? This question could be fully answered through the examination of the original Ottoman state papers written in the period, not only to the Christian recipients but to other addressees as well, so it could be seen whether the Porte used this language generally or only in its correspondence with Christianity or did not use it at all and the “appropriate” terminology was inserted during translation only for the sake of the Christian partners. A full exploration of this question is beyond the scope of this dissertation. However, there are indirect signs that make it highly probable that the Porte also used the given terminology incorporated in its own style, at least towards the Christian princes. Roe emphasized in his introductory remarks to the letter sent by the Grand Signor to the king of England that he did not intend to change the text itself on the one hand and aimed to conserve the Ottoman style (“the folly of their stile, form and vanities”¹⁴⁷) on the other, both of which serve as possible proofs for the original text not having been modified considerably. What is more, Roe referred to two letters when describing their general features, which adds to the probability that their style and rhetoric was similar and thus can be considered characteristic of the early seventeenth-century Ottoman rhetoric.

“The present great vizier, Georgi Mehmet bassa...having delivered mee another [letter] to present to Your Majestie. I haue sent them both...The form of them is in the general vsual, and their phrases such as, for the strains, may give you some delight. Your majestie will bee pleased to accept them in their own expression; it being a less fault in a translator to write nonsense than to make anew. Your Majestie has them almost word for word, faithfully rendered; and if you vouchsafe to pardon their vanity, the matter otherwise, I hope, will giue you satisfaction.”¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁷ *ibid*, 276.

¹⁴⁸ *ibid*, 261.

The letter from the Porte was composed as a reply to James' letter to excuse the delay, due to the terrible winter weather, of the extraordinary ambassador sent to congratulate Murad IV on the occasion of his ascending to the throne. The text interestingly combines the Ottoman style with the already known terminology of friendship and affection.

"Your Majesties letter, full of all sincerity, sent vs, in obseruance of the termes of congratulations of our assumption, and to maynteyne the treaties of ancient loue and friendship, beeing presented by your owne faithfull and well-deseruing ambassador resident in this our high court...and after translated and giuen vs by our chiefe minister, the great vizier, beeing come before our roiall and illustrious presence, and read from beginning to the end, was to vs most acceptable. You hauing in the entrance thereof expressed, with all noble forme and stile, the good will and mind which you beare in and to this our correspondence of loue and affection, and to the strengthening of our peace and friendship; and therein aduised vs, that as soone as you receiued the good news of our happy and prosperous ascention into the high and glorious throne of the Ottomans, (which giues lustre to all other princes) you conceived an vnexpressed joy and gladness...and with many honorable words you haue declared to vs your approbation to maynteyne the antient friendship, which is founded in all sincerity. Therefore wee hauing perfectly taken knowledge of your integrity and truth, and of your good mynd and greate affection allwais borne to our (euer faithfull) house."¹⁴⁹

As the above examples testify *affection* did appear in texts directly addressing the state or prince (the state was addressed only in case it did not have a prince) as the object of affection. This phenomenon reinforces the interpretation of inter-state relations as relationships between human beings. Nevertheless, we find the word much more frequently attached to the expression of friendly intentions and actions or to a common goal that linked the partners. Out of his devotion to Elizabeth described above the English resident whole-heartedly worked to achieve the acceptance of the figure of the Prince of Transylvania as a possible ally by the Protestant states for years. While constantly urging his superiors and the influential figures at the court to take this step, he tried to influence Bethlen to make gestures towards the future allies. Having learned that Bethlen was preparing to send an ambassador to England, in a letter written to him the English resident gave uninvited counsel to the Prince.

¹⁴⁹ *ibid*, 261-262.

“Only as one that would haue nothing omitted, that might any way conduce the perfection of this negotiation your highness will giue mee leave by way of counsel, to wish that your highness also, directly from yourself, made his majestie acquainted with your affection to the general welfare of Germany.”¹⁵⁰

The above mentioned ambassador from Bethlen employed the same language when arguing, a year before Roe’s letter, that his master had not received any support despite that “he has given sufficient testimonies of his affection to the common cause.”¹⁵¹ With the accession of Charles I English foreign policy took a determined turn and actively entered the war. The secretary of state informed Roe about this shift in the following way: “his majestie proceeds soe roundlie and seekes soe earnestlie to forme a strong and sure party, and to expresse his passionate affection to the publicke good.”¹⁵² As a result, in April 1626, after years of supplication, the English resident finally received his new instructions concerning the Prince of Transylvania. The secretary of state verbalized the new policy: “his majesties earnest affection and desire to bring Bethlem Gabor in action.”¹⁵³

It is important to remark that the word *affection* also appears in contexts connected to other spheres of life, that fall outside individual and interstate relations. In that sense it denotes something like *having positive feeling or disposition about something* or *being fond of something*. At the request of Buckingham and the Earl of Arundel, Roe looked for antique treasures in his outreach. In his letters he gave short descriptions about the sculptures, books and other objects he had found. At such an occasion he wrote the following about the sculptures he had looked at: “Two, in my opinion...want much of excellence, great, but brute; and, as I coniecture are some

¹⁵⁰ *ibid*, 396.

¹⁵¹ *ibid*, 239.

¹⁵² *ibid*, 461.

¹⁵³ *ibid*, 502.

storye of Hercules, not mentioned in his labors. The fower [four], to which I haue most affection, are fuller of worke.”¹⁵⁴

These examples demonstrate that the term *affection*, similarly to *friend*, possessed a range of senses varying on a scale of professed emotional involvement. The more fervent sense was to be expressed or underlined with the usage of complementary adjectives or adverbs, such as *very*, *earnest* and *passionate* as the quotations show. The term *love*, the other companion of friendship, also appeared in the terminology. However, while *love* and some form of *affection* were employed equally often in private correspondence, *love*, cannot be defined as truly characteristic at interstate level. Still, a good example for it is the way the ambassador of the Prince of Transylvania expressed himself. He was overjoyed that “the princes hopes might yet bee nourished, and that the offers made in *mere loue*, were not despised.”¹⁵⁵

The whole vocabulary of affection was built on the principle of emotional involvement to apply a present expression. The word *emotion* was not in use in its present sense in the period,¹⁵⁶ *affection*, *passion* and, in the French sources, *sentiment* referred to that state of mind which provides the affective component of motivation. While the presence of emotions assured the attachment to a state/prince or a cause, their lack meant the opposite. This way an image of emotions is displayed as natural and unavoidable accompanying factors of human conduct even in the sphere of politics. The French resident described how he had tested the disposition of the English and Dutch residents “in order to see their sentiments.”¹⁵⁷ The adjectives *warm*

¹⁵⁴ Roe, *Negotiations*, 386.

¹⁵⁵ Roe, *Negotiations*, 472.

¹⁵⁶ Schmitter, Amy M, “17th and 18th Century Theories of Emotions”, *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2010 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2010/entries/emotions-17th18th/>./>.(accessed June 28th 2011)

¹⁵⁷ BnF F 1650, 607r. affin de voir leurs sentiments

and *cold*, generally applied to describe feelings regarding someone or something, frequently appear in the letters of the ambassadors. In their eyes through the observation of *cold* or *warm* behavior the underlying inclination of the actor could be detected. They found this piece of information relevant enough to be mentioned in their dispatches, as a way to describe the presence or lack of supportive emotional attachment of the subject to a certain issue. Césy expressed his worries in autumn 1625 over the rumors he had heard at the Porte which suggested that all the Ottoman troops will be sent to Persia leaving the Prince of Transylvania without considerable support. When he attempted to learn more about the matter at the Porte, he received “general and *colder* responses than what the affairs of Christendom and the progress of the House of Austria would have required.”¹⁵⁸ However, in August 1626 the environment of the French resident observed a change in his attitude and this time he was said to be cold: “the ambassador of France appears in these affairs of Gabor constantly *colder* despite the fact that in his writing the Prince acquaints him with the plan of the princes of Germany confederated against the House of Austria to take away the crown of the Emperor...and give it to his King.”¹⁵⁹ His coldness naturally meant the coldness of his King which in the concrete situation threatened the harmonized attack on the Emperor to be lead by Mansfeld and Bethlen: “the Most Christian King appears *cold* in the decision, God will that it [the Porte] does not get *colder* and change thoughts and come to the ratification of the peace with the Ceasar.”¹⁶⁰ While the bailo reported on the coldness of the French, Wake from Venice

¹⁵⁸ *ibid*, 40r. des reponces generales et plus froydes que les affayres de la chrestienté et les progres de la mayson Daustrie ne requierent

¹⁵⁹ Óváry, 651. L'Ambassador di Franza si mostra in questi affari del Gabor sempre piu freddo, tutto che nella sua scrittura il Principe mostri lui il disegno delli Principi confederati di Alemagna contra la Casa d'Austria, in levar la corona dell'Imperator di essa et darla al suo Re

¹⁶⁰ *ibid*, 631. il Christianissimo si mostra freddo nella risoluzione, Dio voglia che anch'esso non si rafreddi et muti pensiero, et si devenga qui alla ratificatione della pace con Cesare

informed Roe about his activity in the Republic for the sake of Bethlen's diversion and its doubtful effects due to the coldness of the Republic:

"I haue...moued these Signori concerning the particuler of the prince of Transilvania, and desired their concurrency with his majestie in his assistance, in case they haue not already supplied him; or their continuance, if they haue not bagunne to contribute that way; whereof I haue some reason to doubt, in regarde that fewe dayes since I did, at Bressia, see letters of his to the count de la Tour, which did complayne of their *coldnes*."¹⁶¹

The persuasion of someone skeptical or uninterested of the significance to support a certain issue was expressed by the disturbance of his coldness. The secretary of state instructed the English resident to look for the support of the others in hindering the peace treaty between Spain and the Ottoman Empire. He ordered Roe to "*stirre upp* the rest of the ambassadors, *if there be coldness* in any of them, to have a true sence of the common interest therein; and accordingly ioyne with yow and by a good vnion and correspondence proceed in your opposition."¹⁶²

While *coldness* appears to describe indifference, the commitment to a cause, that is the emotional involvement, evoked the application of the term *warm*. For example the devotion of the English resident to the case of the Palatine resulted in the frequent labeling him *warm*. Following his negotiations with the Caimacam, who seemed to have withdrawn from the support of Bethlen, Roe tried to persuade the bailo to write a letter to the prince, which the latter explained with the ferventness of Roe's desire to bring about the diversion: "The ambassador of England who is very *warm* in this affair sought me to write, me, too, to the said prince...but I said that it is not customary for the Ambassadors of the Republic to write to princes without particular licence."¹⁶³ Roe also applied the word *warm* to convey the meaning of

¹⁶¹ Roe, *Negotiations*, 575.

¹⁶² *ibid*, 505.

¹⁶³ Óváry, 548. L'Ambassador d'Inghilterra molto caldo in questo negotio mi ha ricercato di scriver anch'io al detto Prencipe...ma dicendo io non esser costume delli Ambasciatori della Repubblica scriver a Prencipi senza sua particular licenza

being enthusiastic and devoted to a cause. He informed Elizabeth in May 1624 that he found the answers of Bethlen's new ambassadors "uery sober and discreet, but not so *warne* as in former tymes."¹⁶⁴ Talking about the warmth or coldness of a diplomat's actions and utterances did not necessarily mean that he himself had strong feelings about the case. He represented his sovereign and his conduct was primarily defined by the instructions he received. Consequently, in most cases warm and cold behavior of a resident meant the degree of effort he invested in the achievement of a goal and for this reason it conveyed information about the actual foreign policy of his master. On this basis we can state that interstate relations were perceived as emotionally accompanied, where emotional attachment constituted the motivation for action.

Service

In the Ciceronian vocabulary of friendship benefits played the role of the instrument through which the affection of friends could be expressed. Since the emotional bond was equally true and strong in perfect friendship, benefits were continuously and mutually performed. These occasions further strengthened the friendly feelings, thus assuring their long-lasting character. We have also seen that in the Renaissance friendship was actuated both vertically and horizontally not only through giving but also through taking and asking for benefits or services.

Deriving from the expansion of the individual code of behavior to the state level it is not surprising that the performance of benefits also found their place in interstate relations, where they were termed services. The term *service*, in this sense, referred to actions that were or were thought to be beneficial for the other state and thus could be taken as a sign of friendship or of the intention to establish friendship.

¹⁶⁴ Roe, *Negotiations*, 239.

These actions could range from diplomatic aid to military support. The prince of Transylvania, in his search for allies in March 1625 verbalized his intentions to form a close friendship, in the sense of the active supporter, with Venice. In his letter he expressed “his desire to serve it.”¹⁶⁵ Similarly, in January 1628 rumors of his intention to attack the Turk together with Ferdinand reached the Porte, which the bailo reported saying “immediately following the conclusion of peace he sent to His Majesty and offered him himself and his *service* against these.”¹⁶⁶

In the instructions Roe received at his departure James I, who regarded himself as the divinely appointed peacemaker in Christendom,¹⁶⁷ expressed his wish that his ambassador work for the establishment and preservation of peace within Christendom and the peace of all Christian states with the Porte, with a special attention to the Holy Roman Emperor. One day the grand vizier sent for Roe and wished, together with the chancellor, to talk to him privately. They intended to learn more about the affairs and processes in Christendom in order to decide whether to make a breach with the Emperor or not. The English resident convinced them that there was absolutely no need for the Ottoman Empire to give up its peace with Ferdinand and persuaded them not to make a breach. Roe considered it a great achievement and reported that “I am perswaded and may boast that I haue done the emperour *good service*, and diuerted a war, which was very forwardly.”¹⁶⁸ He assessed the outcome of his activity as a favor on his sovereign’s part towards the Emperor, performed through him as an instrument. It was clearly the expression of

¹⁶⁵ Óváry, 559. il desiderio di servirle

¹⁶⁶ *ibid*, 728. che subito conclusa la pace, mando a Sua Maesta ad offerirle la sua persona et il suo servitio contro questi

¹⁶⁷ Smuts, Malcolm “Concepts of Peace and War in Stuart Court Culture” in Asch, Ronald G., Eckart, Wulf, and Wrede, Martin (Hg.) eds. *Frieden Und Krieg in Der Frühen Neuzeit. Die Europäische Staatenordnung Und Die Außereuropäische Welt* (Munche: W. Fink, 2001), 215-238, 220.

¹⁶⁸ Roe, *Negotiations*, 89.

friendly feelings, that is, peaceful intentions and benevolence, in a strained political situation between the two powers.

A similar sense can be derived from the application of the term in its negative form. Roe's successful mediation between the Porte and the Poles mentioned above resulted in a peace treaty, "in the articles his [James'] name standing in the front as the cause and procurer, acknowledged by both. Hereby I haue not only engaged, but in some sort obliged that nation not to doe *disseruice* to his majestie, if he haue occasion of warre."¹⁶⁹ From the phrasing it can be concluded that Roe interpreted the fact of mediation as a friendly act on the part of the king of England which, even in the worst case, should or ought to result in a moral obligation for the king of Poland that withholds him from "doing disservice" that is something harmful, the opposite of service. Being aware of the close political relationship between the Emperor and the King of Poland, Roe knew that in case Ferdinand wages a war that directly affects the king of England, the least Poland was morally obliged to do was to preserve peace and not to support the Imperial forces actively. This could definitely be expected, based on the mutual character of services. Poland's passivity in case of wartime, instead of the customary support given to the Emperor, could be considered as a return of the service James had performed.

While offering to do service to each other could have a rather general or vague meaning, it was frequently applied for concrete situations, too, at which occasions it clearly referred to the efforts made in the support of someone. Césy informed his superior that the "the ambassador of Holland *serves* him [the ambassador of Bethlen] openly and the bailo of Venice, too...The English does a little less than the others not

¹⁶⁹ *ibid*, 125.

showing as much interest and passion against the Emperor.”¹⁷⁰ The bailo assured his superiors that “I continue in these affairs governing myself in keeping with the orders of Your Serenity and to his [Bethlen’s] *service*.”¹⁷¹ Let us note that the service mentioned by Césy derived not from a principle desire to do him some benefit but the underlying goal to act against the Emperor for the achievement of which the support of the prince was used as an instrument.

Beside the Ciceronian function of the word *service*, one can detect other meanings of it, the boundaries of which are, however, blurred. Let us examine the next example: the ambassador of Bethlen informed Roe that the prince “had commended him to declare vnto mee the great affection his master had allways borne to the *seruice* of his majestie.” So far we find the well-known terminology. The answer seemingly applies the same language, still it is revealing: “I replied, that his majestie could not but accept gratefully the good affection of that prince, expressed to his *seruice*.”¹⁷² It is noteworthy to examine this utterance closely. The other party, in this case the ambassador of the king of England, accepts the gestures of Bethlen but he gives no sign of the king of England’s desire to return them. Although the generous acceptance of services and favors did not contradict the concept of friendship and was conceived as a positive sign, the fact that it appeared as strictly one sided evokes a relationship different from equal and mutual friendship. It rather seems to allude to a vertical type of friendship, a hierarchical relation, in which the Prince of Transylvania appears as inferior to the King of Great Britain. Bethlen’s ambassadors never appeared to have complained about this treatment which suggests he himself agreed to

¹⁷⁰ BnF F 1650, 39r. l’Ambr de Hollande le [ambassador of Bethlen] sert ouvertement et le Baile de Venise aussy...L’Anglois en fait un peu moins que les autres ne monstrent pas tant d’interest et de passion contre l’Empr

¹⁷¹ Óváry, 698. io continuo in questi affari a governarmi conforme alli ordini della Serenita Vostra et al suo servitio

¹⁷² Roe, *Negotiations*, 391.

the hierarchical difference. He also offered his service to the French king through his ambassador who communicated to Césy “the pure and sincere affection he has to the *service* of Your Majesty and the common good of the other kings and princes interested.”¹⁷³ Service in this sense emerges as a term designating an activity beneficial for the partner, and which can be applied as a discursive strategy to convey the message about the social relationship between the partners involved. It could be used both in the language of equality and hierarchy and patronage, in the latter case also among the high nobility and members of prestigious families,¹⁷⁴ just like between greater and smaller princes

Similar and clearer examples for the two basic senses of meaning can be found in the correspondence between the ambassadors and their superiors. In these cases *service* appears as the task performed by the subject towards his master, something which he owes the one who occupies a higher place in the social hierarchy. No wonder the term *obedience* is frequently linked to the word in these cases. When Roe asked the secretary of state for new instructions concerning Bethlen, he referred to his absolute dependence on the king’s will, and the service of the king as the most valued activity in his life.

“I beseech your honor aduise me what his majestie intends towards him, that to his ministers and affairs, as I shall here discouer, I may conforme myself to his majeties will, which I only desire, knowing *obedience* is the best of my *seruice*.....There shall nothing more comfort mee in this banishment, than to know his majestie hath good opinions of mee, nor for any ability, but for a sincere *desire to doe him seruice*.”¹⁷⁵

The quotation also displays that the most valuable feature in a subject was supposed to be the desire to do service to his master, as Roe repeats it elsewhere: “I will sitt still, like a watchman, though both sides seeke to drawe mee; I shall therefore

¹⁷³ BnF F 1650, 509r. la pure et sincere affection quil a au service de vre mté et au bien commun des aultres Roys et princes intheresses

¹⁷⁴ Magnusson, *Shakespeare and Social Dialogue*, 40-41.

¹⁷⁵ Roe, *Negotiations*, 15.

be the more vpright, and will haue no guide but his majesties commaunds; nor end, but his *seruice*.”¹⁷⁶

The same language appeared in Bethlen’s relationship to the Porte when the bailo talked about the prince’s “*notable service* to the Grand Signor”¹⁷⁷ during the 1621 fights against Ferdinand. “Good service” was required also from the Bassa di Buda.¹⁷⁸ In these cases the performance of service appears as a duty of a subject, both in Europe and the Ottoman Empire. In the latter case subjects were also considered slaves of the Sultan, and for this reason it is remarkable how the two images of friend and slave related to the figure of the prince of Transylvania mix in the letter of the Sultan sent to the princes. He called Bethlen “ancient and benevolent slave and undoubted cordial friend.”¹⁷⁹

If we turn again to the ending of letters the parallel duality occurring in the sense of the terms *service*, *serve*, *servant* immediately strikes the reader. People of the same status vary between the usage pertaining to the language of the mutual equality of Ciceronian friendship and the polite, humble “language of hierarchy,” through which the speakers portray themselves as inferior to the other. Isaac Wake usually finishes his letters with either “I will take leaue and rest Your Lordships most affectionate seruant,”¹⁸⁰ or “I rest euer Your Lordships, most affectionately to do your seruice.”¹⁸¹ Roe ends his letters to Carleton saying “Your Lordships affectionat frend

¹⁷⁶ *ibid*, 91.

¹⁷⁷ Óváry, 514. *notabile servizio* del Gran Signor

¹⁷⁸ *ibid*, 662. *buon servizio*

¹⁷⁹ *ibid*, 654. *antico e benevolo schiavo et indubitato cordial amico*

¹⁸⁰ Roe, *Negotiations*, 475.

¹⁸¹ *ibid*, 346.

to serue you.”¹⁸² Quite often the two senses are merged in the same phrase: “and so I conclude in all true affection, your faithfull frend and seruant.”¹⁸³

In case of letters to superiors the word *servant* is used either in itself or frequently accompanied by *humble* and quite often by *friend*. Some examples from letters written to superiors are: “Your Honors humble and faithfull seruant and frend,”¹⁸⁴ “your Graces deuoted humble seruant”¹⁸⁵ and “your Honours humble seruant.”¹⁸⁶ When we examine the letter endings of the Secretary of State we see that their wording confines itself to the Ciceronian language: “Your lordship’s assured loving frende,”¹⁸⁷ “your lordships affectionate frend to serue you”¹⁸⁸ or “your lordships assured frend to serue you.”¹⁸⁹ At these occasions the connotation of *serve* is doing friendly service, not serving as an inferior. It is not by chance that the expression *your servant* never appears above the signature of the secretary of state. This phenomenon seems to be a long established style, since Magnusson, examining the correspondence of Robert Cecil to some of his diplomats also found the difference between the two tones. However, instead of recognizing it as a rhetorical feature in the given social relations, she mistakenly attributed the language of friendship used by Cecil to the assumption that he was on friendly terms with his diplomats, and she tried to find the reason for their humble style in their dispatches in some forced explanation.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸² *ibid*, 210.

¹⁸³ *ibid*, 165.

¹⁸⁴ *ibid*, 143.

¹⁸⁵ *ibid*, 135.

¹⁸⁶ *ibid*, 122.

¹⁸⁷ *ibid*, 104.

¹⁸⁸ *ibid*, 463.

¹⁸⁹ *ibid*, 505.

¹⁹⁰ Magnusson, *Shakespeare and Social Dialogue*, 98.

The French ambassador's endings of letters sent to his superiors and the King convey a much more rigid and hierarchical style where self-deprecation is even more apparent. This is well testified by the usual ending: "your very humble and very obliged servant."¹⁹¹ On the other hand the Venetian bailo's endings lack any of the above mentioned styles, he simply finishes with "Of your Serenity."¹⁹²

Through the above examples of the application of *service*, *servant* we can witness the overlap and merging of two languages, that of humanist friendship and that of the hierarchical social relations. Without any doubt the common etymological roots of the words *serve*, *service* and *servant* largely contributed to the appearance of this phenomenon and made the trespass between the two senses easy and smooth.

Service was also used to denote an act performed for the sake of a noble goal from the perspective of the actor (and the audience), so, similarly to *affection*, it could be linked to objectives beside living people. The Prince of Transylvania was constantly expected to give testimony of his devotion to the goal of the Protestant states in the war. In order to meet this request, through his ambassador sent to the Porte he promised to spend the winter of 1625 near Cassovia with his army, close to the Emperor's territories instead of returning to Transylvania. His ambassador emphasized, as the bailo reported, that the prince

"was all this time anxiously waiting for some resolution from the interested Princes concerning his proposals, which never came, he believed that they are not inclined to embrace him; nevertheless, to demonstrate to them his promptness, since then he has maintained ten thousand armed soldiers, with whom he has lately moved, and lead them to Cassovia to the borders of the Emperor."¹⁹³

¹⁹¹ BnF F 1650, 649v. Vre tres humble et tres oblige seruiteur

¹⁹² Óváry, 699. Di Vostra Serenità

¹⁹³ *ibid*, 604. che stato tutto questo tempo ansiosamente attendendo dai Principi interessati qualche risoluzione alle sue esibitioni, la quale non essendo mai venuta, gli la creder, che non inclinino in abbracciarle; che nondimeno per dimostrar egli la sua prontezza, ha mantenuto dall' hora in qua dieci mille soldati armati, con quali si e ultimamente mosso, et condotto in Cassovia a confini dell' Imperator

Roe's comment on this step written to the secretary of state shows that Bethlen calculated correctly: "and if he performe thus much, he shows his sincerity and doth a *good service* to the generall cause."¹⁹⁴ The English resident also shared his conviction with the bailo about the prince who "disposes himself to the *service* of the common cause."¹⁹⁵ Bethlen's agent also assured the bailo that his master will be engaged "with the same ready will which has always accompanied his operations for the *common service*."¹⁹⁶

Quite interestingly we find in the papers a sense of *service* that can be interpreted as a synonym or a euphemist expression of *interest*. It can be harmonized with the language of friendship as long as the action is intentionally performed for the friend's sake. A service done to a friend logically means the execution of something that is beneficial or profitable for the friend. Consequently, if an act threatened the interest of someone, it was considered as contrary to service. For example this was the opinion of the bailo when he learned about the activity of the Emperor's agent who tried to achieve that the Porte make a truce with Spain: "this matter is so much *contrary to the service* of the Grand Signor and that of his friends."¹⁹⁷

Nonetheless, it frequently happened that with the usage of the word *service* reference was made to own interest rather than to that of a friend's, which distanced its usage from the humanist benefit category. A good mixture of the two can be found in Césy's letter in which he talked about a Turkish official, the Captain of the Sea "who has rendered very good *services* a thousand times to the [French] King and the nation and now is in such favor with his master and the influential men at the Porte

¹⁹⁴ Roe, *Negotiations*, 423.

¹⁹⁵ Óváry, 710. disporlo all'servitio della cause commune

¹⁹⁶ *ibid*, 563. con la medesima pronta volonta, che ha sempre accompagnato le sue operationi al servizio commune

¹⁹⁷ *ibid*, 525. questa materia tanto contraria al servitio del Gran Signor, et de suoi amici

that his friendship is very necessary for us, until now I have made him hope for some benefits in order to draw from it *service and utility*.”¹⁹⁸ It was also him, who unintentionally produced an interesting evidence for the very close, almost synonymous meaning of service and interest. In one of his letters to the King Césy first wrote “I will conduct myself according to the interests of Your Majesty and his crown” and then he crossed out *interest* and inserted *service* in its place.¹⁹⁹

Not only Bethlen talked about his service to the king of England, Roe also used this term, but from his pen service gained a different meaning. Comparing the prince to Hannibal, who could not exploit his victory, he argued “that these new motions, wherein Gabor is exasperated, as hauing lost and cast away his benefit, maybe applied *to his majesties seruice*, if he [Bethlen] may receiue any encouragement.”²⁰⁰ He was so seriously convinced that the prince “only may make an usefull diuersion *for his majesties seruice*”²⁰¹ that he had even had a command sent to Bethlen from the Porte translated “that his majestie may consider and judge, if thereby any consequence may be drawne *to his [the King’s] seruice*.”²⁰² In these examples it is clearly acceptable to substitute *to/for his service* with *interest* or, in a milder form, *for the achievement of his goals*. This approach unveils a point of view which is closer to the language of hierarchy than the language of friendship. The sovereign emerges as the center to which all the events are related. The acts of others are perceived through the lens of being expedient for him or not. If the former, they can also be termed as service.

¹⁹⁸ BnF F 1650, 14v. lequel a rendu en milles occasions de tresbons seruisses au Roi et a la Nation, et ce trouve maintenant en telle faueur aupres son maystre et des grands de la porte que son amitié nous est tres nessessayre, iusque present lon luy fait esperer quelque bienfaicts pour en tirer du seruisse et de lutilite

¹⁹⁹ *ibid*, 229r. me conduyray selon que les ~~interests~~ service de vre mté et de sa couronne

²⁰⁰ Roe, *Negotiations*, 230.

²⁰¹ *ibid*, 272.

²⁰² *ibid*, 437.

The adjective derivative of service, *serviceable*, leaves no doubt about its single meaning of being expedient. The degree of a possible financial support for an attack on the Emperor from Hungary was the subject matter of a number of letters written in 1625. In them Roe attempts to persuade the secretary of state that “a little this way, especially vpon Gabor, would induce a more *seruicable* diuersion for Germany, than that slow and long expected from the princes of the Nether Saxe.”²⁰³

Sincerity and Constancy

The most frequently applied complements of the terms of affection were *sincerity* and *constancy*. These words underlined the true character of friendship as opposed to be established for some advantage, which would have deemed it to exist only temporarily. Their application on an almost compulsory basis reflects a value system which highly esteemed the presence of affections on the one hand, and required their regular expression and reinforcement on the other. This latter characteristic was, however, double-edged. Although the repetitive assurance of truth and steadiness in the emotions was in line with Cicero’s statement that true friends regularly express their friendly feelings, the obligatory manner counteracted their convincing force.

The question of sincerity and constancy were naturally crucial in politics, and they were even more important in interstate relations, where the flow of information took a considerably great time. The fact that the average time for a letter to reach London from Constantinople was almost two months means that the English ambassador needed to wait around four months at least to receive an answer to a concrete question. This period could be extended due to the inability of the state secretary to draft his answer in a short while, in cases when the Venetian postal

²⁰³ibid, 453.

service decided to hold back letters or simply because of wintertime. Among such circumstances it can be easily imagined how slowly a decision could have its effect as well as the high risk that in the meantime the situation would change. In order to reach a decision which was in harmony with the course of events the sincerity and constancy of the partners in their devotion to the given cause could not be missing, otherwise the necessary time span could not have been dealt with.

The customary expressions of true and steady emotions obviously became part of the conventional rhetoric from one's own part, and in certain cases it surely covered true substance. Consequently, the others' expressions of sincerity and constancy were also conceived as equally possibly false and true. For this reason great efforts were made to discover whether such utterances were empty phrases or not, since they could be either. When the residents reported about others' sincere and constant affections they certainly meant what they said. The sincerity of the others was unceasingly examined, hoped for and doubted. Roe wrote the following disillusioned lines in April 1627 about the conduct of Venice:

"I am thanckfull to the senate and their ministers, for euerye good office they doe me, and will requisite it in effects: of priuat curtesyes I am full; I wish they would really correspond with his majestie and the publicque...but I fynd they are in awe of the French, by the ceremonies of the new baylo here arriued, which he affords unwillingly; for their hearts burne within them, and yet they seeme not to discontent that nation: their friendship is sincere for their owne respects and benefitt."²⁰⁴

The bailo reported how the rest of the ambassadors finally believed in Bethlen's sincerity based on external signs, such as his wedding with the sister of the elector of Brandenburg: "I had a discussion about it with these other Ambassadors, who...after the conclusion of the marriage of the Prince with the sister of the Brandenburg, it seems they do not have more doubt of his sincerity in his exhibitions

²⁰⁴ *ibid*, 640.

to our princes to start war.”²⁰⁵ The French ambassador informed Paris about the “sincere affection to the peace” of the Spanish king towards the Porte,²⁰⁶ which gave much headache to the residents. Sincere affection was regarded as the assurance for one’s plans, but the fact that it was also only an utterance, undermined its absolute credibility. For this reason gestures and other signs were examined to clarify the real intentions.

Passion and Zeal

As it has been discussed the adjective *passionate* was meant to magnify the emotional content of the term affection and to outline the overall strength of the emotional attachment to the object of affection. We also read above that the Secretary of State explained the change in the direction and priorities of English foreign policy by the new king’s passionate affection to the public good. The word *passionate* evidently had positive and meritable connotations in this utterance, and since it was used to describe a king’s intentions by his secretary of state, it can be regarded as a generally well integrated and accepted terminology. If it is so, it further supports the view that even strong emotions were welcome in the field of politics. But passions in themselves were insufficient or even harmful in state affairs. A telling piece of information on this appears in an early letter of Roe written shortly following his arrival at Constantinople. He gives a detailed account of the chaotic conditions at the Porte defining its main causes. One of them is the unsuitability of the sultans (Osman II, Mustafa I) who are “bothgouverned by their mothers, and they by their owne passions.”²⁰⁷ It is easy to associate this statement with that of Richelieu in his Political Testament about women.

²⁰⁵ Óváry, 610. Io ne ho discirso con questi altri Ambassatori, quali...dopo la conclusion del matrimonio del Principe con la sorella del Brandenburgh, pare non habbiano piu dubbio della sua sincerita nelle sue esibitioni a nostri Principi di romper la guerra

²⁰⁶ BnF F 1650, 460v. sincero afetto alla pace

²⁰⁷ Roe, *Negotiations*, 60.

The cardinal explained that women are not fit for government because they are lazy, cannot keep secrets and are led by their passions.²⁰⁸ The views of both Roe and Richelieu are supported by a vast tradition of misogynist literature flourishing from the late Medieval Ages.²⁰⁹ It focused, among other things, on the unsuitability of women for government due to the numerous flaws in their nature. One of the most prominent representatives of this argument was John Knox, who, in his treaty entitled *The First Blast of the Trumpet - Against the Monstrous Regiment of Women*, summarized the reasons behind this view. He claimed that

“to promote a woman to bear rule, superiority, dominion or empire above any realm, nation or city is repugnant to nature, contumely to God, a thing most contrarious to His revealed will and approved ordinance, and finally it is the subversion of good order, of all equity and justice.”²¹⁰

He also finds the reason for this in women’s corrupt character. Those who have governing role should be constant, stable, prudent and doing everything with discretion and reason which virtues women cannot have in equality with men in the opinion of Knox,²¹¹ shared by later generations as well.

The view expressed in regard to female government can serve as the manifestation of the centuries old axiom much advocated by the antique authors and consequently by the humanists, according to which for the government of a state the virtue of prudence is indispensable. The virtue of prudence was as much cherished in the early seventeenth century as in the Renaissance. It is well depicted by the high number of references to it in the letters. The ambassador of the Emperor “praised the

²⁰⁸ Richelieu, Armand Jean du Plessis *Testament Politique ou Les Maxims d’État*, (Paris, Editions Complexe, 1990) 32-33.

²⁰⁹ Bock, Gisela. *Women in European History Making of Europe* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2002) 1-27.

²¹⁰ Knox, John (Mason, Roger A ed.). *On Rebellion* Cambridge Texts in the History of Political Thought (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 8.

²¹¹ *ibid*, 20.

singular prudence of the Republic.”²¹² The bailo reported that during his negotiation with the Caimacam “I praised the excellent mind and the *singular prudence* of His Majesty [the sultan].”²¹³ Césy in his dispatch to the French king related that “I did not miss to make this Porte understand how much the presence and the *prudence* of Your Majesty are able to disperse the biggest clouds.”²¹⁴ Roe in his letter to Bethlen embarked on the persuasion of the prince that the reason for not having arranged the transfer of the agreed sum lay in the prudence of the English king and not in the decrease of his affections towards the prince:

“herein I will presume to bee witness that this delay proceeded from no coldness in his majestie toward your highness....but out of that *prudence* whereby all his roiall actions are vniformly directed; esteeming it too much praecipitation to declare his resolutions vntill the foundation were first deeply established by composing the league, vpon which and into which, with safety, all those who concurred in the like affections might be receiued.”²¹⁵

Good government thus was based on prudence and passions in general were not considered as conducive to it unless they were subordinated to prudence. However, if they were, passions had an approved place in political life. It was all right to express intense emotions if they were justified by reason. On the occasion of the discussion between Roe and the Ottoman officials about the possible breach with the Emperor, the vizier acquainted the English resident with the news recently received from Bethlen which said if the Turks did not attack the Emperor soon, they would have to face an army of 150,000 men the following year raised by the king of Poland, the Emperor, the king of Spain and some German princes. This army would not stop until having expelled the Turks from Europe. As Roe described “I was almost amazed, and in some *passion* replied; that I did wonder at this fiction mingled with some truths, to

²¹² Óváry, 536. lodo la singular prudenza della Repubblica

²¹³ ibid, 541. lodai l’ottima mente et singolar prudenza di Sua Maesta

²¹⁴ BnF F 1650, 569r. Je nay pas manqué de fayre entendre a cette porte combien la presence et la prudence de vre mte est capable de dissiper de plus grands nuages

²¹⁵ Roe, *Negotiations*, 540.

giue creditt to the untruths.”²¹⁶ This sort of passion, a justified strong emotion, when it could be taken as a proof of a meritable virtue, such as honesty, was not only tolerated but even welcomed.

Zeal, which emerged in *De Amiticia*, as the sign of the overabounding love felt for the friend, was also regarded a passion.²¹⁷ It had the same function in Roe’s letter sent to Elizabeth, in which he asked for her pardon for having thought that she had been displeased with him because he could not send her any encouraging news from Constantinople. When Elizabeth assured him of her benevolence Roe asked again her forgiveness for not taking her goodness into consideration:

“The assurance of your Majesties fauour continued, and the benigne interpretation of my humble desire to do your Majestie some acceptable service (though it bee accompanied with no fruit) receiued, by your gracious letter of August, doth no more reuiue mee then confirme that goodnes in you, for which you are admired. If I did a little fear, bee pleased to pardon that effect of *my zeale*; in that passion I looked not vpon your Majestie, but my owne demerit.”²¹⁸

As is the case with passions emerging from emotional attachment, zeal is not right or wrong in itself, but only in relation to its subject. Roe talks about the “intempestiue *braynsick zeale* of France”²¹⁹ on one page and the laudable zeal of Bethlen on another.²²⁰ Zeal can be described as the main driving force behind the acts, which is responsible for carrying them out with full blast.

The dispatches of the English resident supply us with a telling example of the significance of the presence of zeal in an ambassador. He regularly asked to be forgiven for the zeal which urged him to serve his King whole-heartedly and led him to share his opinion with his superiors or be extremely detailed in his letters even if they did not ask for it. In May 1623 the English resident found himself in a difficult

²¹⁶ *ibid*, 87-88.

²¹⁷ *ibid*, 312.

²¹⁸ *ibid*, 312.

²¹⁹ *ibid*, 375.

²²⁰ *ibid*, 424.

situation both from a diplomatic and a personal aspect. Bethlen was preparing to attack the Habsburg territories and managed to gain the approval and support of the Porte for this. Roe personally would have sided with the Prince of Transylvania without hesitation, as he saw a great opportunity in this attack for the restitution of the King of Bohemia and his family on the one hand and was convinced about the dissimulation of the Emperor in the ongoing treaties at Brussels about the restitution of the Palatinate with James on the other. On top of it the vizier also urged him as the ambassador of England to write a letter to the king and convince him to participate in this endeavor. Roe could not resist but in addition to relating the events in details he wrote his opinion to the king and, again, asked to be pardoned for his zeal:

“I could no disobey, not rely uppon myne owne judgment, though their reasons were forceable and probable, and the ill dealing with your Majesties goodness and patience in your treaties might haue tempted mee, vntill I should recieve your Majesties further order, which now hath confirmed mee. God will recompence upon your roial head, your most christian constancy, so much the rather, because they who enjoy the benefitt thereof, so little meritt it. I hope your Majestie will *pardon mee this zeale to your seruice*.”²²¹

In another letter sent to the secretary of state the same structure appears, Roe shares his own opinion about the matters and then adds: “I haue presumed, and I fear, exceeded my limits, *extra provinciam faltitare*; butt I hope, his majestie and your honor, *will take my zeale in the best sense*.”²²² After a number of such cases it becomes evident that these occasions did not happen accidentally but rooted in both a style and a value system, which considered the presence of the passion of zeal in the service of a right cause praiseworthy; praiseworthy, despite its being constantly referred to as a flaw that needs to be pardoned. The rhetoric here becomes more complex than it was in the previous cases. What appears is an image of a man who cannot help the overflow of the passion of zeal in him for a noble goal, even if he is

²²¹ *ibid*, 152.

²²² *ibid*, 272.

aware that it results in a behavior which is not in harmony with the required mode of conduct and thus asks to be forgiven. This image expresses the endless devotion which rules a virtuous man and directs his actions. If he did not commit the unintentional error of being overtaken by this passion he would not testify his absolute commitment to the cause or his master. The paradox according to which making an error counts as the truest sign of dedication to a noble goal is even more evidently presented on those occasions when the overflow of zeal is openly called an error, however an error that one does not want to hide but rather to pronounce. Roe wrote in another letter to the secretary of state: “If I haue in any presumption, or in one syllable, exceeded my limitts, to meddle thus farre in matters so high aboue mee, I humbly craue pardon; these *my errors are the fruits of my zeale to your Majesties seruice* and of an honest heart,”²²³ and talks about “an *error of abundance of zeale and loue* both to his person [Charles], our kingdomes, and religion.”²²⁴ He even applies a Latin phrase for it, *errore amoris*.²²⁵ The zeal for the king’s service had to precede all other passions in the case of subjects,²²⁶ and the way of its proper functioning was to be determined by the expressed will of the king. Roe gave account of this threat when he was left without updated instructions. He said without them “I walk in blyndness without any rule butt myne owen discretion, which *by too much zeale may erre errore amoris*.”²²⁷

Such errors were taken favorably by the superiors: “I must assure you, his Majestie hath alwais sett a due value vpon your negotiations and advertisments, observing, through the whole course of your proceeding, the characters of a sober and

²²³ *ibid*, 277.

²²⁴ *ibid*, 163.

²²⁵ *ibid*, 134.

²²⁶ *ibid*, 458.

²²⁷ *ibid*, 134.

solid iudgement, and *liuelie expressions of your zeale* to his service.”²²⁸ Expressions of zeal conveyed the message that the actor was completely committed to the fulfillment of his task, which could serve as a guarantee of his up-most performance. Although Césy did not apply the *errore amoris* rhetoric, he also expressed many times that the most important things in the service of the king are “prudence and zeal.”²²⁹ He did not forget to emphasize to his superiors from time to time either that “I work from my part with *so much ardor and zeal*.”²³⁰

Having discussed the significance of zeal in the terminology of the period, we need to examine what role this passion played on the interstate level. Due to the lack of a common authority above the states whose expressed wish could have determined the direction in which this passion was to be applied it was the common value system that defined the right goals in whose service zeal could appear. Such goals were the common good, peace, fight against tyranny, all of which will be examined in the next chapter. These goals supplied the princes with justifications for their actions. The crucial difference between zeal being present in a subject toward his sovereign and that of a prince toward the goals generally considered right lay in the wide scope of action a prince had. These directions were called the *disposition* of the prince. His disposition could change easily, as long as he stayed within the frame of the ethical norms, that is he could justify his actions. This freedom threatened with considerable incalculability, a characteristic which was perfectly expressed by Roe who tried to persuade his superior to seize the opportunity offered by Bethlen: “it were good husbandry to shorten the recouery of the Palatinate, by embraceing all helps, and

²²⁸ *ibid*, 501.

²²⁹ BnF F 1650, 574r. *prudence et zelle*

²³⁰ *ibid*, 414r. *ie travaille de ma part avec aultant dardeur et de zelle*

using of diuersions, *while the zeale of others is warme*; whom as is usuall in confederate warrs small disasters and little occasions may change and coole.”²³¹

Despite the possibility of their changeable attitude, some expression of zeal was required from the princes to explain their moves as well as in general to be directed by this passion in their actions, which their ambassadors conveyed to the world. The bailo assured one of his visitor, a French Huguenot who was traveling in the region in order to help the Protestant cause, about the disposition of “the Most Excellent Senate, full of prudence and together with it the highest degree zealous for the public good.”²³² Gábor Bethlen had an ill reputation among the Christian princes, especially at the beginning of the 1620s, because of his conduct not being founded on zeal but on self-advantage, as they perceived. Upon the news of the peace made between Bethlen and the Emperor in 1621, Roe reported the rumors at the Porte:

“I perceiue there is yett some thought left, that Bethlem Gabor hath made his peace with the emperour, only to gett time, until he might haue succours from this state [Porte]: which as I doe not beleeeue, butt that he hath done it hartily for his aduantage; and I am sure, the viziers here are of the same opinion...and I am and euer haue been perswaded that he only doth his owne busines on both sides, without any zeale of other friendshipp.”²³³

The usage of *zeal* at interstate level harmonized with the rhetoric of friendship. Similarly to *service* it appeared either in the company of *friend*, *friendship* or a goal which was regarded ethically right to pursue. This ethical code underlined the essential role of emotions in human conduct in conformity with Cicero’s axiom saying that emotion differentiates men from rocks. It placed the concept of friendship, valued above all things, in its center. The frequent usage of the term friend and the cluster of words around it imitated the successful execution of the perfect form of friendship on the surface. The actions favorable for the other party were termed services and were

²³¹ Roe, *Negotiations*, 424.

²³² Óváry, 754. eccellentissimo Senato, pieno di prudenza et unitamente in sommo grado zelante del ben pubblico

²³³ Roe, *Negotiations*, 60.

regarded as the active exercise of affection or zeal. With the help of this all parties included portrayed themselves as virtuous and the embodiment of the humanist ideal.

In case of states the presence of the emotional factor received an even greater emphasis due to the peculiar circumstances. In interstate relations the aspects of utility and expediency were more openly present, even in the works of the theorists. Still, the language used aimed at hiding or even counterbalancing this fact. Friendly states explained their moves with their affection and zeal for another state or a common goal and this was expected from the other as well. An exclusive focus on one's own good as a guiding force behind political decisions was blamed and condemned. The compulsory verbal conformity with the principles in rule reveals the fundamental intention to meet the ethical requirements. For this reason the norm and the form were constantly reinforcing each other and dictated the application of the language of friendship, affections, passions and zeal. The actors were convinced of the necessity to squeeze all their steps on the surface in the frame set by the ethics.

However, any language applied has to be suitable for the conveyance of messages, even if not all of them are in harmony with the code. They also need to find their ways through the utterances. In this case the strict requirement of compliance with the language of affection resulted in a diversification of meanings attached to the words on the one hand, and creativity in the usage of words on the other, exploiting the blurred boundaries between senses with all their associations.

It is important to note the difference between the degree to which the language of affections was applied in the English, the Venetian and the French papers. Whereas the English letters present the reader with a lively and full scale application of the humanist terminology, the Venetian and French ones seem to yield to its usage more

out of convention. While the English correspondents regularly expressed their views through this language, the bailos and Césy mostly used it in their official communication with others or when they reported on what others said, but very rarely towards their superiors when writing about their own views. Césy's strategy to ameliorate his relationship as the ambassador of France with the Venetians aimed to achieve it with the calculating use of affections. He described how the new bailo offered him his services and his reaction:

"I answered him that I would expect from him as a minister of the Republic the effects of so much honest speech not being enough to unite well with us in Christendom if they did not do the same in Turkey which I said with an affectionate voice and act, which made the impression that I desired because his reply was that he would serve the Republic badly if he missed that."²³⁴

From time to time their view about the terminology as being obligatory formality was expressed. This is how Zorzi gave account of one of his meetings with the Transylvanian ambassadors:

"Later the ambassador with the ordinary resident visited the ambassadors, and came to me. After the *ordinary compliments* he presented me with the enclosed letter of the Prince, and told that he has commanded [the ambassador] to greet me affectionately in his name and assure me to still continue in himself the same very good disposition to serve the interests of the league and of the Republic...the Ambassador desired to learn from me the intention of the Serenissima Republica, and whether it has any resolution that he can inform the Prince about...I corresponded with the *due terms of compliment*, assuring the Ambassador of the perfect goodwill of Your Serenities towards the Prince, and the great esteem of his valour, and of his generous resolutions much profitable to the common good and to his own."²³⁵

²³⁴ BnF F 1650, 666. ie luy repondis que jattendoy de luy comme ministre dela Republique les effects de tant d'honnestes parolles n'estant pas asses de vnire bien avec nous en Chrestienté Syls ne faysoient le mesme en Turquye ce qu'ayant dit avec une vois et une action affectée, cela fit l'impression que ie desiroys car sa replique fut quil seriroit mal la Republique sil y manquoit

²³⁵ Óváry, 604. Fu poi l'ambassador col Residente ordinario alla visita delli Ambassatori, et venuto alla mia, dopo gli ordinari complimenti mi presento l'acclusa lettera del Principe; et espone, che gli havea comandato salutarmi affettuosamente in suo nome et assicurarmi continuar tuttavia in lui la medesima ottima dispositione di servir agl'interessi della lega et della Repubblica...desiderava l'Ambassator saper da me l'intentione della Serenissima Repubblica, et se tengo alcuna risolutione per poterla avisar al Principe...Io corrisposi con mi debiti termini al complimento, assicurando l'Ambassator della perfetta volonta della Serenissima Vostra verso il Principe, et della stima grande che fa del suo valor, et delle sue generose risolutioni molto proficue al ben commune, et al suo proprio.

Venier also reflected on his application of the terminology as done out of convention during his meeting with the extraordinary ambassador of Ferdinand: “it seemed to me good to convey the affectionous observance that the Republic bears towards His Cesarean Majesty through the promptness and the proper terms.”²³⁶ A few months later they met again, and the bailo talked to him once more “with terms of courtesy and lovingness as appropriate.”²³⁷

It is of interest to note the complex nature of the application of these expressions. While their usage first of all can be regarded in these cases as formalities, still, the phenomenon that the ambassadors felt obliged to follow the forms even if not sharing completely the norms prove how firmly the terminology ruled the vocabulary of interstate relations in the period. What is more, the fact that they reported on the application of the language shows that it was regarded as constituting an important part of political communication. It still had some function: the compliance with the forms conveyed the message which the forms used to denote. They conveyed the desire to establish or maintain friendly relations the content of which was defined by the particular situation.

²³⁶ Óváry, 741. havendomi parso bene con la prontezza e con tutti li propri termini far conoscer l'affetuosa osservanza che la Repubblica porta a Sua Maesta Cesarea

²³⁷ Óváry, 747, con termini di cortesia et di amorevolezza come conveniva

The Objects of Zeal and Affections

The previous chapter described the importance of the presence of emotional devotion in the acts of princes and states on the discursive level, both to each other as friends (affection and love) and to the goals they pursued (affection and zeal). These goals were presented in a form that displayed them as embodying the most elevated targets for the classical, humanist political activity. By claiming to aim at the achievement of these goals the righteousness of the endeavors was justified, which appeared as the means to restore the just state of affairs in accordance with the ethical code. Beside the just causes the just goals received at least as much emphasis in the rhetoric. The fact that these and only these causes and goals were referred to supply us with the strict rhetorical frame in which the users needed to squeeze their verbal performance and align it with the discourse available. This practice, again, shows the general intention to comply with the principles, or at least, to make that impression.

To a considerable extent the reasons behind a prince's activity refer to future goals to be achieved rather than past injuries. Below I am going to discuss those causes and goals that appear as considered generally acceptable to justify the actions. Their generality is displayed by the fact that all the ambassadors apply them and only them so they constituted the non-questionable elements of discourse for the people involved. Not surprisingly, the three main professed goals primarily derive from the Antique tradition and can be grouped under the labels *peace*, *common good* and the *fight against tyranny*, all of which interlinked in a natural manner in the rhetoric.

Peace of Christendom

Peace, or *quiet* as it was frequently called, constituted one of the most fundamental values in the period. It appeared as something that people genuinely aimed at both in their personal and public life, regardless of their status or religion. It was a primary goal to be achieved in trade¹, sought by sultanas and vezirs², Polish noblemen³ and ordinary people⁴ if for any reason their quiet was disturbed. At least to that degree were peace and tranquility the preconditions of a well-functioning state. They were regarded as a blessing of God.⁵ Consequently the same view was held concerning interstate relations, especially those within Christian Europe. The “universal peace of Christendom” is one of the most frequently repeated concerns in the letters. The situation did not differ in this respect from that of the middle of the sixteenth century, when, for example, the King of France, Francis I, instructed his ambassador to acquaint the King of England with the main goal of his actions which was the “public good and the quiet of Christendom,” contrary to those of the Emperor, Charles V.⁶ When we go back further in time, we find that peace and concord represented the highest value in political life for both the Thomists and the Italian republicans in the thirteenth and fourteenth century.⁷ Peace was a core value of Christianity and Aristotle had also outlined its primary character in the *Nichomachean Ethics*. Aristotle claimed that “we work to have leisure and wage war to live in peace”⁸ which statement was widely shared by later theorists.

¹ Roe, *Negotiations*, 112.

² *ibid*, 150.

³ *ibid*, 192.

⁴ *ibid*, 743.

⁵ *ibid*, 55.

⁶ Poumarède, Géraud. “Justifier l’injustifiable: l’alliance turque au miroir de la chrétienté (Xvie-Xviie siècles).” *Revue d’histoire diplomatique* (1997): 217-246, 220.

⁷ Skinner, *Foundation of Modern Political Thought*, I. 56.

⁸ Aristotle, *Nichomachean Ethics*, 1177b bk10, ch7, 194.

The discourse of the early seventeenth century mirrored this view as well; the final aim of a war could be nothing else but peace and the restoration of justice. Peace was to be preserved as long as it was possible, and when it could have been kept only at the expense of the maintenance of an unjust condition, war could ensue. War, however, had to keep the restitution of justice in its focus. It was only utilized as a tool for the reestablishment of peace on a solid foundation. In the discourse war among Christians was presented as piteous and evil and James I rigorously followed this view in his politics. Consequently, he disapproved his son-in-law's undertaking to become the king of Bohemia and following the defeat of Frederick and the loss of his territories he began negotiations with the Emperor while nourishing the plan of a marriage between his son Charles and a Spanish infanta. He strongly believed in the possible restoration of justice and peace with the means of words, so he rejected the demand of the Parliament to start war against Spain in 1621 and arranged a general peace conference in Brussels.⁹ These negotiations continued for the most part of 1622 to the grief of many who were convinced about their vanity, for example Roe, Carleton and even Elizabeth, the daughter of the King and the wife of Frederick in exile: "my father will neuer leaue treating though with it he hath lost vs all....now would make a truce for 15 months, till a peace be made; to giue our enemies time to settle themself in our countrie."¹⁰ Roe, as a good ambassador, did not articulate his own views publicly, and emphasized the merits of the considerable efforts of James I with which he attempted to avoid war within Christendom.¹¹

Nevertheless the failure of James' endeavor gradually became apparent. By July 1622 a correspondent of Roe notified him about the approaching shift in English

⁹ Parker, Geoffrey. *The Thirty Years War* (London: Routledge, 1997), 44-45.

¹⁰ Roe, *Negotiations*, 146.

¹¹ *ibid*, 79.

policy: “the king our souereigne hath left nothing undone, which the wit of man could inuent (except taking armes), for working *peace in Christendom*: but now we begin to find that that is neuer to be won by treaty which hath beene lost by the sword.”¹²

James in his last year finally agreed to start war after

“hauing with exceeding christian patience forborne 4 yeares, spent infinite sommes of mony in treatyes and exposed his only sonne, his highnes the prince of Wales, to a dangerous vioage [to Spain] only in hope by the wayes of justice and to auoyd the effusion of bloud, to obteyne a desired peace....But now his majestie finding himselfe with requited with delusion...they [with the king of France, who pursued his anti-Spanish policy in the Valtoline] have together resolved to use the justice of their arms.”¹³

The quotation shows that the supreme value of peace for the antique authors notwithstanding, the goal of its preservation penetrated the minds in the entourage of James as a primarily Christian value. The preservation of peace as a Christian endeavor also appears in the quotation below, describing how Roe presented the shift in English foreign policy to the Caimacam at the Porte. It is noteworthy that besides the Christian values the antique value of justice is presented, too, preceding the Christian one: “my lord and master hauing in vayne attempted all righteous and Christian wayes to procure the restitution of the Palatinate the antient patrimony of his children, was at last resolved to take vp justice of his armes with other princes his allyes, to recouer it by the sword from whosoeuer should oppose him.”¹⁴ James is presented to have acted according to this rule as a king following the ethical code out of personal conviction. The model itself was presented by the King of Sweden, too, a couple of years later, in line with the general legal and moral requirement. Before his entering the war in 1630 he claimed in his manifesto that he had tried to preserve peace and avoid war with Ferdinand as long as it was possible.¹⁵

¹² *ibid*, 63.

¹³ *ibid*, 391.

¹⁴ *ibid*, 351.

¹⁵ Piirimäe, Pärtel. “Just War in Theory and Practice: The Legitimation of Swedish Intervention in the Thirty Years War.” *The Historical Journal* Vol. 45, (2002) 499-523, 506.

Charles I continued the war with greater determination than his father, and intended to achieve that Denmark and France actively participated in it. The secretary of state used the same discourse when he gave account of the intentions of the King to broaden the circle of those involved in the war “for restoring the *publicke peace*.”¹⁶ In the midst of martial events the value of peace increased even more. The justification of war through asserting peace as its goal was supplemented by the claim that war was indispensable for the restoration of peace. When Bethlen’s ambassador informed Roe about the prince’s willingness to offer his services, in his answer he stated that war was the precondition of peace: “to this generall discourse I replied That his majestie could not but accept gratefully the affection of that prince expressed to his service and the *common cause now vndertaken for the publique peace*, which was no way to be hoped for but *by a iust precedent war*.”¹⁷ The resident of the Emperor also presented his point of view as guided by the concern for the peace of Christendom. During his visit to the bailo he tried to gain his support in hindering that the Porte give succors to the Prince of Transylvania. He tried to persuade the bailo calling his attention to “this war of this Gabor of so much *damage and harm to the Christendom*” and asked his help in order to “divert the help of the Porte to the said Gabor, and the harms and damages which Christendom would feel from it.”¹⁸ The French resident expressed his and his masters’ similar worries in connection with Spain due to “the consequences that this country can cause to the *quiet of Christendom*.”¹⁹ Even several years later he argued against Spain saying that the Spanish “testify by their actions that they cannot

¹⁶ Roe, *Negotiations*, 463.

¹⁷ *ibid.*, 391.

¹⁸ Óváry, 528. questa guerra di esso Gabor di tanto danno et pregiudizio della Christianità...divertire li aiuti della Porta al detto Gabor, et li pregiudici e danni, che da ciò ne sentira la Christianità

¹⁹ BnF F 1650, 419v. le contreloup que cette payx...pourroit causer au repos de la Chrestiente

bear the *quiet of Christendom*.”²⁰ In the discourse of the anti-Imperialist party one of the sins of the Emperor and the King of Spain was their disturbing the public peace.

Common good

In the humanist tradition the concept of *common good* had a core role: it constituted the supreme goal of political activity for both the citizen and the prince, in case of kingdoms. The former’s worth was to be measured by his capacity to deploy his energies in the service of common good,²¹ and the latter’s rule could not be considered right and just if it did not have the common good of the people in its focus.²² The concept referred to the well-being of the political community as a whole, including both material and spiritual/moral goods. *Common good*, as the chief concern of statesmen and rulers, was supposed to be in the center of the lawmakers’ activity and thus the laws themselves. It was perceived as the opposite of the self-centered operation of tyrants which ended up in infringing the just laws of the community or the creation of unjust laws.

Although *common good* had occupied a prestigious place in the rhetoric describing political activity since Antiquity, the concept in its application to interstate relations seems to have been underdeveloped. Deriving from the general one-to-one transfer of the ethics of intra-state political life to the interstate level, its content did not suit exactly the new frame in some cases. This happened to *common good* as well. The parallel between individuals as the smallest units within a state and the commonwealths as the smallest units within the community of states appeared valid as long as it was meant to convey the sense according to which the aim of all political

²⁰ *ibid*, 223v. *tesmoygnent par leurs actions ne pouvoir souffrir le repos de la Chrestienté*

²¹ Skinner, *Foundation of Modern Political Thought*, I. 81.

²² *ibid*, 58.

activity was to procure that people live happily in peace. However, no theory applicable specifically to interstate relations can be found in the works of the theorists or discovered in the practical usage of the term. The parallel did not offer any tools to dissolve the possible contradiction between the objectives of the common good focusing on the good of a particular commonwealth and the common good of a larger community such as Christendom or mankind. This question will be addressed in more detail in the next chapter.

The achievement of common good was the goal of every Christian ruler as far as rhetoric was concerned. The English resident at The Hague informed Roe about an ambassador of the Emperor who “seasons his whole discourse with professions of the emperor’s *peaceable disposition and desire of the common good*.”²³ The idea of Bethlen, temporarily embraced by the Porte, to invite the king of Denmark, the king of Sweden and the Elector of Brandenburg to send ambassadors to Constantinople was also based on the intention to achieve their firm involvement in the war “animating them to proceed cheerfully in their union for the common good.”²⁴ A French traveler, a Huguenot, visited the bailo in May 1629, who introduced himself “as a man very much zealous for the *universal good*, most devoted to the Serenissima Republic, and, due to some relations he has had...loving of my person.”²⁵ In return the bailo assured him that the Republic was “full of prudence and in the highest degree *zealous for the public good*.”²⁶ The traveler also assured the bailo about Bethlen’s intentions saying “by now he was ready to spend all [money] together with his life in order to advance

²³ Roe, *Negotiations*, 183.

²⁴ *ibid*, 537.

²⁵ Óváry, 753. come uno molto zelante del bene universale, devotissimo della Serenissima Repubblica, e per qualche relatione ch’egli ha havuto...amorevole della mia persona.

²⁶ *ibid*, 754. pieno di prudenza et unitamente in sommo grado zelante del ben publico

his fortune to the *universal benefit*.”²⁷ Based on his discussion with the Transylvanian ambassador in November 1629 the bailo related that the prince, already very sick, started his move against the Polish and “regretted very much that his diseases did not allow before his move to the service of his friends and the public good.”²⁸

As the above quotation displays, common good had synonyms, such as *public good* and *universal good*, *universal benefit*. Similarly to common good, public good was used for both the good of one specific political community and the good of all. However, it did not refer exclusively to political issues. Roe, besides searching for antiquities for Buckingham and Arundel, actively participated in the collection of antique treasures which later were to be transported to England. He expressed his joy over the valuable manuscripts Petty, the agent of the Earl of Arundel sent particularly to find antique treasures, had managed to acquire: “Mr Petty...by my meanes had admittance into the best library knowne of Greece, where are loades of manuscripts...he conueyed away 22...when hee returnes, I make no doubt he will communicate and contribute to the *publicque good*; for I esteeme him a woorthy man.”²⁹ In this case public good refers to the cultural benefit of the people of England.

Upon the news of the agreement of a truce between France and Spain, in June 1626 Wilkinson, a correspondent of Roe from Venice, made the following comment: “the world did long conceaue a better opinion of France, then by this reconsiling itselfe with Spayne it can justly claime by meritt; and now does not spare freely censure that nation, *ill affected to the publique good*.”³⁰ It is obvious that in this case public good means more than the good of a particular country. It refers to something

²⁷ *ibid*, 757. al presente era pronto di spenderli tutti con la vita insieme, per auvanzar la sua fortuna a beneficio universale

²⁸ *ibid*, 778. rammaricava assai che le sue indispositioni non havessero permesso prima la sua mossa a servitio de suoi amici e del ben pubblico

²⁹ Roe, *Negotiations*, 500.

³⁰ *ibid*, 520.

above the nation, a public or common good which is, or rather should be, shared by everyone. According to this view an exact, well-definable public good existed which left no scope for diverse interpretations, and all the princes/commonwealths were required to preserve and nourish it. The condemnation of France is presented as the outcome of the bad opinion of “the world” that became disappointed in the turn of French politics. It is interesting to see to what a great extent relativism is excluded from this approach, and how a value system emphasizes its application of universal principles, even when it is evident that not the whole Christian world “censures that nation.” The Emperor, for example, who also aimed at the achievement of the common good as it could be read in the quotation above, certainly welcomed France’s peace with Spain and considered it as a step towards the realization of common good. While the frame of the discourse was the same for everyone – all acted for the common good as was required – the contents could vary. Without any doubt the two opposite parties perceived the common good of Christianity differently but worked for it equally fervently on the discourse level.

An interesting shift in the meaning of the term can be detected in the phrasing of the French ambassador when he reported about his negotiation with the Transylvanian ambassador in May 1626. The subject of this discussion was the financial support with which the Western powers would have contributed to Bethlen’s new attack on Ferdinand’s troops. Having listed Bethlen’s promises and requirements regarding the amount and the timing of the payments the ambassador added that

“in order that no one think that the money makes him declare [war] but also the pure and sincere affection he has to the service of your majesty and to the *common good of the other foreign Kings and princes* he says that if the count Mansfelt with the forces that the King of Denmark can furnish him with can enter Silesie he will not wait.”³¹

³¹ BnF F 1650, 509r. affin quon ne croye pas que l'argent le face declarer ainsy la pure et sincere affection quil a au service de vre mté et au bien commun des aultres Roys et princes estrangers il dit

In the quotation common good does not refer to the abstract general good of the community of mankind or at least of Christendom, but it is qualified as the common good of the kings and princes involved. In this case *common* refers to something shared by a definite group, which is smaller than the whole and excludes others. Thus Bethlen's move appears to be performed for the good of this particular group, shared by all the members. If this is the case, it rather falls in the category of service (a word which also appears in the text) than the zeal felt for the common good in the classical sense. This was not a unique case; the components of the vocabulary from time to time appeared as taking up a sense traditionally belonging to another term or expression. To some extent they were interchangeable, as long as the overall message fell within the frame of the required format and content. We can also assume that users changed them due to their application in an automatic way, paying less attention to the meaning than to the rhetorical function.

All in all it can be stated that, similarly to the primary importance of peace for men, in the rhetoric there was a general agreement concerning the overall value of common or public good. In general it meant the favorable conditions among which people could happily live and prosper. However, as it appears, the concrete route to reach that target could differ greatly, depending on what obstacles were identified in its way. Their removal was perceived as the precondition to the establishment of peace and common good. These obstacles presented themselves in certain issues which then became part of the discourse as "causes." Causes meant motives for war already in Roman usage.³² In the eyes of the anti-Imperialist party the precondition of common good was the defeat of Ferdinand's troops, through which they could remove the

que sy le conte de Mansfeld avec les forces que le Roy de Danmarc luy pourra fournir peult entrer dans la Silezie il natendra pas

³² Tuck, Richard. *The Rights of War and Peace: Political Thought and the International Order from Grotius to Kant* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 20.

obstacles that materialized in the cause of Germany, including the cause of the Palatinate and the cause of Protestantism. These causes all arose due to the tyrannical behavior of the Emperor and the aspiration of him and the king of Spain for universal monarchy and moved the opponents to wage just war in their defense.

Just War

Views on the rightfulness of war varied considerably in the period. Willingness to fight for liberty was seen as an ordinary civic virtue in Italy; by contrast many northern humanists shared the stoic conception that war was fratricide.³³ Deriving from the overall value of peace, the possibility of starting war was strictly defined in the theories. The principle that war needed to be justified and the justification could be made exclusively with reference to certain conditions originated in Antiquity.³⁴ In Roman times the ritual of declaring war opened with a demand for satisfaction for enemy offences and, if this was refused, continued with an appeal to the gods as witnesses to the justness of the Romans' cause. Cicero fused this tradition with Greek influences, which, mediated by Augustine helped to shape the medieval just war theory.³⁵ It became a doctrine in the Middle Ages mostly based on the works of Augustine and, above all, Aquinas. By the Renaissance the just war tradition diverged into a so called humanist and a scholastic track. They both agreed that defensive war was just for everybody and the support to friends and allies was also included under this motivation.³⁶ Offensive war could be justly initiated for the punishment for unjust injuries or against an unjust attack. While the scholastic view stopped here and did not

³³ Skinner, *Foundation of Modern Political Thought* I, 244.

³⁴ Tuck, Richard. *Philosophy and Government, 1572-1651* Ideas in Context. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 20.

³⁵ Rich, John. "The Middle Roman Republic", in Hartmann, Anja V ed., *War, Peace and World Orders in European History*, (London; New York: Routledge, 2001), 62-71, 68.

³⁶ Pagden, Anthony. *Lords of All the World: Ideologies of Empire in Spain, Britain and France C. 1500-C. 1800*. (New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 1995), 289.

allow a war without a precedent assault,³⁷ the humanist one also allowed for a preemptive war, to prevent most likely future dangers. However, views also varied on the degree of possible pre-emptiveness. Grotius held that it could serve as a justification only in a present and imminent threat, which makes it a necessity.³⁸

Humanity might lead to war in the system of Gentili. The care for those with whom some closer links have been established, like friends, neighbors and states of common religion intertwined with considerations for self-defense. But the rightness to defend the just subjects of a sovereign stems solely from the character of mankind as a community:

“They are not outside the kinship of nature and society of the whole world. And unless we wish to make sovereigns exempt from the law and bound by no statutes and no precedents, there must also of necessity be someone to remind them of their duty and hold them in restraint. I should no wish ... to introduce any conflict of powers or to establish any supervision of one sovereign by another one. He is like an arbiter in the dispute, there is no competent judges when a dispute arises regarding the commonwealth. Dispute regarding the commonwealth arises when the number of subjects aroused is so great and of so character that it is necessary to make war against them. Violation of the common law of mankind...consideration of the duty which I owe the human race is prior and superior.”³⁹

It is important to emphasize that the requirement to present a just cause for war was of primary significance in the political culture of the period. It can be less attributed to the presence of a strong legal affinity, of which there is no sign in the sources, but rather to the general attitude to act or rather be seen acting in line with the ethical norms. The English resident referred to it even in his negotiations with the Porte. He talked to the Caimacam about the just cause of James I for the restitution of the Count Palatine in his dominions “unjustly taken from his children by violence”⁴⁰

³⁷ Tuck, *Philosophy and Government*, 51.

³⁸ Piriimae, *Just War in Theory and Practice: The Legitimation of Swedish Intervention in the Thirty Years War*, 510.

³⁹ Gentili, *De iure belli libri tres*, 74-75.

⁴⁰ Roe, *Negotiations*, 341.

and he persuaded the Turkish officials that there was “no just ground of a war”⁴¹ against the Emperor at the beginning of his embassy. As it has been mentioned, James I did not agree with Frederick’s acceptance of the Bohemian crown and his fight for it because he had had not just cause to wage war initially. He accepted the crown of Bohemia from the Czech estates, which, however, were not entitled to offer it.

In the sources nothing can show better the universal requirement of a just cause for war than Roe’s remark, without doubt shared by his contemporaries, according to which even God found it important to supply the Jews with a just cause for war against the Amorites.⁴² In his letter to Elizabeth Roe draws a parallel between the Old Testament events and those of his own age (particularly the attack of the Duke of Bavaria against Frederick) through which he implied that from that turning point war could be justly waged on behalf of the Palatine. He argued:

“as God would not giue the children of Israel the land of the Ammorites, though he were Lord of all the earth, butt that he would first lay them a iust title, euen in the eyes of men, by refusing passage and water and things of right and common by the law of nature; soe he hath stirred up some to open a iust way to their owne destruction.”⁴³

Fight against Tyranny

In the rhetoric of the anti-Imperialist party one of the main obstacle of peace and the common good of Christendom was the tyrannical activity of the Emperor. The word *tyrant* had constituted a pillar of political thought since Aristotle, who termed tyranny the worst form of government. He said that “a person is not a king unless he is self-sufficient and superior in all that is good; such a person needs nothing further so he will look not to his own interests but to those of his subjects. Tyranny is quite the

⁴¹ *ibid*, 86.

⁴² Most probably Roe refers to Judges 11:14-22.

⁴³ Roe, *Negotiations*, 59.

contrary, since the tyrant pursues his own good...a king who is bad becomes a tyrant.”⁴⁴

The just war tradition outlined the rightfulness of war against tyrants. The idea of the rightful resistance to tyrants flourishing during the periods of religious controversies surely had some influence on the frequent application of the expression. Tyranny traditionally meant two types of misdeed, one was the usurpation of the territory of a just ruler, the other the wanton reign of the ruler who did not respect the laws of the community but regarded only his own good. Aristotle termed the latter as tyranny in the fullest sense “that rules irresponsibly over all equals and betters for its own benefit, not for that of the subjects. It is therefore contrary to the will of the subjects, since no free man endures such rule if he can help it.”⁴⁵

The bailo reported the Dutch resident’s view about the little probability that after Bethlen’s death the parts of Hungary under the prince’s rule will return and unite themselves with the rest of the country: “considering the tyrannies and violence that he [the Emperor] used against the subjects those of the house of Austria, they were resolved not to return anymore under that dominion.”⁴⁶ Ferdinand was blamed for committing both types of tyranny, and even more. Under the label of the tyrannical behavior of the Emperor a complexity of offenses were meant by the contemporaries, which added up and served as an unquestionably just cause for war. The tyranny of the Emperor, which manifested itself in the actual offenses by him and his supporters (some princes of the Holy Roman Empire, the Pope and the Jesuits) constituted the core of the discourse against him. The rhetoric used around *tyranny* reflected the

⁴⁴ Aristotle, *Politics*, 1160a,bk8,ch10, 155-156.

⁴⁵ *ibid*, 1295a1 bk 4, 94.

⁴⁶ Óváry, 779. considerando le tirannidi et violenze che si usavano contra li suditti da quei di casa d’Austria, erano risoluti di non ritornar piu sotto quel dominio

humanist tradition, no wonder that expressions such as *liberty* and *oppression* appeared next to it in an obligatory manner and refined the sense of tyranny.

Liberty and Oppression

Liberty together with *throwing off the yoke of the servitude* as a goal of political activity appeared already as early as the beginning of the fourteenth century in the discourse of the Florentine diplomatic letters against the Emperor.⁴⁷ Since then it had constituted the basis of the political vocabulary, fighting against tyranny for liberty and the common good became a frequently applied expression.⁴⁸ The concept dominated the discourse in Venice, too, to the extent that Venetian thinkers such as Sarpi and Boccalini interpreted the conflict of Reformation as an expression of political aims opposing Imperialism.⁴⁹ This usage did not confine itself to Italy, but fully penetrated the terminology applied in the Christian part of the world. Thus the major proposed goal of the war waged by the anti-Imperialist party was the achievement of the liberty of Germany. The Huguenot traveler mentioned above asked the bailo's help to convince the Porte about the need to support Bethlen's attack against the Emperor, who assured his visitor

“if good occasion arose, I will not fail to use such terms that will be able to bring benefit to the common good, which I assured him is supremely in the heart of all Your excellences, as those, who *love the liberty*, and who would want that together with it each enjoy the tranquillity and quiet that is necessary to Christendom.”⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Skinner, *Foundation of Modern Political Thought* I, 6-17.

⁴⁸ *ibid.*, 39.

⁴⁹ Tuck, *Philosophy and Government*, 103.

⁵⁰ Óváry, 756. se buona occasione si fosse portata, non haverei mancato di usar quei termini che haverei stiato poter giovar al ben comune, che lo assicurai esser supremamente a cuore di tutte l'eccellenze Vostre, come quelle che amano la liberta, e che vorriano che insieme con essa cadaun godesse la tranquillita e quiete necessarie alla Christianita

The issue was so central to the rhetoric, that it even appeared in the communication with the Ottoman Empire. The Protestant residents pressed the Porte to include the issue of the liberty of Germany in their peace with Ferdinand:

“I haue this day, accompanied with the Dutch ambassador, done the office with the vizier and pressed the grand signors promise giuen me, not to conclude peace with the emperor without the comprehension of the kyngs and princes friends of the port, and the *liberty of Germany*, with as much feruor and protestation, as the cause doth require.”⁵¹

Roe in his letter to Bethlen talked about the liberty of Germany as well, as the aim of the alliance among the opponents of the Emperor: “your highness armes and affayres, vnited with the forces of his sacred majestie my lord and the princes colleagued for the generall libertye of Germany.”⁵²

Liberty appeared as the main goal of the allied states to achieve in the future; consequently, they recognized the state of oppression in the Empire. As his letter sent to the Prince of Transylvania testifies, in Roe’s interpretation the Emperor had no other reason to maintain his peace with the Porte than to “secure himselfe on this side that hee might conuert all his forces to the *oppression* of your highnes frends and allyes in Germany.”⁵³ In this desperate situation Roe soon identified the great opportunity embodied in Bethlen and argued for years to convince his superiors that “ther is no man so fitt and able to retreue the *oppressions of Germanye*.”⁵⁴ When finally they agreed to make an alliance with the prince, they negotiated the conditions for his attack with captain Quadt, Bethlen’s ambassador sent to the courts of the allies. In London Quadt agreed, as the Venetian resident at the English court reported, that “Gabor will be assisted with forty thousand German [dollars]...Gabor will oblige

⁵¹ Roe, *Negotiations*, 700.

⁵² *ibid*, 589.

⁵³ *ibid*, 350.

⁵⁴ *ibid*, 312.

himself to make war against the *oppressors of the liberty of Germany*, the house of Austria and its adherents.”⁵⁵

It is not clear at first reading today what sort of liberty had been trampled on by Ferdinand and his supporters in the contemporaries’ perception and what the nature of the oppression so frequently referred to was. It was not self-explanatory for all the contemporaries either, who used the term in accordance with the conventions, but might have meant different things under it. The difference in the conception of the French statesmen and the German princes came to light during the negotiations preceding the Treaty of Osnabruck in 1648. The French delegation was convinced that the German estates’ strife for liberty meant their desire for complete freedom, that is independence, whereas their real aim was to assert ancient and well-established rights and had no intention to weaken the empire.⁵⁶

In the 1620s three main categories can be delineated from the papers, all deriving from the unlawful activity of the Emperor in the eyes of his opponents: usurpation, infringement of the laws or constitution of the empire and religious oppression. All these were included in the cause of Germany.

The Cause of Germany

The *Cause of Germany* stood in the center of the rhetoric of liberty. This expression, as an umbrella term, included all the issues that formed the basis of the just war against the Emperor. It was regarded as the concrete manifestation of tyranny and the main obstacle in the way of common good and peace. The allied princes were

⁵⁵ Óváry, 802. Gabor sara assistito di quattordese milla Alemani...Gabor si obligera di far la guerra contro gli oppressori della liberta di Alemagna, la casa d’Austria, et i suoi aderenti

⁵⁶ Osiander, *The State Systems of Europe*, 32-37.

frequently referred to as “princes confederated for the *cause of Germany*,”⁵⁷ and Césy regularly talked about “the *affairs of Germany*.”⁵⁸ He also commented on Bethlen’s possible engagement in other fights in which case “he will be less capable to serve the *Peace of Germany*.”⁵⁹

The Cause of Germany thus also concerned the princes outside its boundaries and gradually became called as the *common cause* or the *public cause*, as well. Most probably the first occasion when Roe heard the application of this term in this context happened at the first visit of the count of Turn and the ambassador of Transylvania at the English residence. He reported about their discussion to the secretary of state describing how Turn tried to involve him in their affairs referring to “my good affection to the *publique cause* (for so hee termed it).”⁶⁰ The clause in brackets “for so he termed it” implies that Roe found strange the application of this term to what Turn meant. Nevertheless, in 1625 he already used the sense applied by Turn. Talking about the political intentions of Charles I, which might be regarded as an official standpoint, the term obviously referred to the professed cause of the war and not to peace, whereas the latter appeared as the overall goal:

“His majestie also labors earnestlie himselfe and inuites other princes and states to ioyn with him, to dispose that king [French] to a peace with his subiects of the religion; that giuing an end to that vnnaturall and vnprofitable intestine warre, he may employ his armes and forces with honor, and for his owne safetie, in the *publicke cause*, and for restoring the publicke peace.”⁶¹

The phenomenon of shifts in concrete meaning, as the example of the English resident’s usage of *public cause* testifies, reinforces the suggestions that a set of vocabulary operated in the period, or, in certain cases, throughout centuries, and the

⁵⁷ Óváry, 650. Principi confederati per la cose di aleagna

⁵⁸ BnF F 1650, 508v. les affayres dalemagne

⁵⁹ ibid, 45v. il sera moins capable de seruir a la Paix dAlemagne

⁶⁰ Roe, *Negotiations*, 81.

⁶¹ ibid, 463.

concrete meaning of the various components was defined by those who applied them. With a change of circumstances the meanings could also change.

Similarly to the synonymy of common good and public good, public cause and common cause shared the same meaning. Roe gave account of the event when the French ambassador sent a letter to Bethlen “upon propositions sent hither in Aprill last, to take armes in the *common cause of Germany*.”⁶² Césy himself employed this term as well, when contemplating about the real intention of the prince of Transylvania:

“considering that the wife he proposes to marry the said prince of Transylvania is relative of so many kings and princes declared against the usurpations of the House of Austria it is difficult to believe that they have agreed to this wedding without some condition that oblige the Transylvanian to serve the *common cause*.”⁶³

Infringement of the Laws and the Constitution of the Empire

Beside the tyrannical act of usurping the territories of the count Palatine and other dominions,⁶⁴ Ferdinand also proved himself a tyrant in trespassing the constitutional⁶⁵ order of the Empire and in disregarding its laws, as his opponents perceived. The letter of the secretary of state to Roe, in which he informed the ambassador about the embassy of Buckingham and the Earl of Holland to The Hague, includes all the main components of the official discourse. Among them the component of the infringement of the laws also had a prominent role:

“The constancie of his majestie to pursue the resolutions and designs for recoverie of the palatinat and not to lay down armes vntill hee hath restored and assured the *peace of*

⁶² *ibid*, 510.

⁶³ BnF F 1650, 480v. considerant que la femme quil pretend espouser ledit prince de Transilvanie est parante de tant de Roys et princes declares contre les uvsurpations de la Mayson D’Austrie il est difficile a croyre quilz ayent concenty a ce mariage sans quelque condition quy oblige le Transilvain a servir a la cause commune

⁶⁴ Roe, *Negotiations*, 393.

⁶⁵ Sense: mode of organization of a state

christendome; but most especially that of Germany wherein so many princes and states haue beene either dispossessed or oppressed for their good affection to the common cause and interest of religion, libertie, safetie, and conservation for the sacred fundamental lawes of the empire; which, of late years, haue beene trampled on by the armes, and to satisfie the ambitions of the house of Austria.... hath now sent the duke of Buckingham and the earle of Holland, ambassadors extraordinary to the Hague...to treat for a vnion and league offensiue and defensiu for the recoverie of the libertie of Germany and the reducing of things from the extremity and danger they are in, to the wonted equalitie whereby each prince and state may be restored and secured in their ancient and rightfull dignities and possessions."⁶⁶

In the text of the treaty of The Hague, which supposedly displayed a language in line with all the requirements of contemporary ethical norms and was accepted by the princes and states involved, the offense against the constitution of the Holy Roman Empire also played a prominent role.

"Considering the dangerous intrigues, offenses, violence and oppression, which for some years...not only are threatening, but also through open war and executed error against the established and confirmed pacification....and against the other fundamental constitutions of the empire and the sworn capitulations... All of which concerns not only the electors, princes, towns and states of Germany, but also, through an inevitable consequence, the neighboring kings, princes and states, friends and allies because of the interest they share in the conservation of the aforementioned peace, constitutions, capitulations and confirmation, in which having been pressed and forced to obviate it in time and prevent the too violent and insupportable courses of these awful intentions and oppressions, and following that the reestablishment and the conservation of the aforementioned liberty, rights and constitutions of the empire...from so evident and approaching ruin."⁶⁷

The sources do not specify which laws of the empire were "trampled on." One can reconstruct them on the basis of the defined goals of the war. The Emperor frequently broke the normal legal rules or the tradition in his dealings with Protestant communities within the Holy Roman Empire. A good example for that is the story of Donauwörth, a free town where Catholics and Protestants had long been mutually disrupting each other's religious services. Following a Protestant offense the Aulic

⁶⁶ Roe, *Negotiations*, 461.

⁶⁷ *ibid*, 464-465. en consideration des mauuaises et tres dangereuses menées, outrages, violences et oppressions lesquelles depuis quelques années...non seulement ne sont menacées, mais aussi par guerre ouverte et de fait executées contre la pacification establee et confirmée...et contre les autres constitutions fondamentales de l'empire et les capitulations jurées. tout ce qui concerne non seulement les electeurs, princes, villes et estats d'Alemagne mais aussi par vne ineuitable consequence les roys, princes, et estats voysins, amys et allies a cause de l'interest qu'ils ont en lo conservation des dict paix, constitutions, capitulations, et confirmations esté poussé et contraint pour en temps obuier et empecher les cours trop violents et insupportables de ces mauuais intentions et oppressions et pour le restablissement et conseruation de ladicte liberté, droicts et constitutions de l'empire a de s'opposer a vne si euidentement approchante ruine

Council, which had Catholic majority, put the town under Imperial Ban, which meant it lost all rights and possessions.⁶⁸ The outrageous act of the deprivation of the count Palatine of his estates and the electorship and its investiture on the Duke of Bavaria, the main supporter of the Emperor was also at the core.

It should be noted that the professed goals of the treaty lacked any religious overtone. It was formed “for the defense of Germany and the recovery of the Palatinate”⁶⁹ as Roe put it. It could be logically argued that the desire to attract princes of different denominations to support the war, such as the king of France or the Elector of Saxe withheld the partners from any direct reference to religious grievances. However, it seems more probable that war on religious grounds was not found justified enough, an issue which will be addressed in more detail below. The ambitious and unjust activity of the Emperor was perceived as dangerous to all the states in Europe regardless of their religious identity, which was sufficient to justify the war.

Usurpation

Usurpation meant the unlawful occupation of a territory and served as one of the just causes of war. In the discourse it had an important place, since the recovery of territories was an acceptable goal for all who opposed the Emperor, regardless of religion. This appeared as the professed aim of the planned involvement of Bethlen in the argumentation of the residents at the Porte: “to encourage him to enter into confederacy with the antient friends of the port, and to vnite with them, either for their defence, or *the recouery of the territoryes of any of their allyes vsurped, or*

⁶⁸ Asch, Ronald G. *The Thirty Years War: The Holy Roman Empire and Europe, 1618-1648* European History in Perspective (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1997), 27.

⁶⁹ Roe, *Negotiations*, 522.

oppressed.”⁷⁰ However, usurpation did not happen at the very beginning of the war, it was not a motive in its outbreak. The appearance of the term in the discourse can be connected to the occupation of the Palatinate in 1621 and the deprivation of Frederick from the Palatinate and his electoral title in 1623. As it has been discussed above, this event supplied the anti-Imperialist league with the most acceptable justification of war. Most probably this is what Roe referred to when, in May 1625, he and the other residents, agreed to help Bethlen to persuade the Porte about the cessation of the peace treaty negotiated at Buda and the active participation of the prince in the league

“as most necessary for the facilitation of the generall ends of the publique peace and the restitution of the dominions vniustly possessed by the house of Austria...I would restreyne that demand to a liberty to maynteyne the old leagues made formerly with the kinge of Bohemia and his frends; which beeing allready once allowed, would bee free from suspition and could not bee refused...*it was the same quarrell for the same prince; only the cause a little altered and more iust for the recouery of his antient patrimony.*”⁷¹

The residents could easily obtain the agreement of the Porte for Bethlen’s plans since the rhetoric of usurpation had already been embraced by the Porte not long before, and especially promoted by the Caimacam then in office. The bailo, as well as the Protestant residents, had already visited him in February 1625 to obtain the permission of the Porte for Bethlen to join with the anti-Imperialist princes and found him absolutely supportive, as the bailo related:

“I found the Caimacam not only well informed but also very fresh in the news itself of the troubles of Italy by the causes of the Grissons and the Valtelline as much as that of England and the other princes by the Palatinate, showing to know that not only the King of France, the Republic and the Duchy of Savoy, but England and the States [of Holland] and other princes are already together with these confederated against the Spaniards and the house of Austria for the recovery of the mentioned countries occupied by them; and he told me that the mentioned princes are all friends of the House of Ottoman, and *their goals are very just, that everyone have his own*, also comply with the mind of the Grand Signor, which is not to agitate war and turbulence in the world, but that everyone have his own, as it is proper. He added that in these affairs the ambassador of England and of the States of [Holland] have

⁷⁰ *ibid*, 529.

⁷¹ *ibid*, 393.

treated [with him] in the past and now freshly...conforming to that [will] of His Majesty and the other princes that the Spaniards and the House of Austria *do not occupy that of others*.”⁷²

The recovery of the Palatinate became a central component in the Cause of Germany since the fate of the Palatinate and Frederick exhibited all the critical issues on which the rhetoric drew. It was in the focus of the anti-Imperialist powers to such a great extent, that not only Bethlen promised to include it in the peace treaty with the Emperor,⁷³ but even the Porte made such a promise saying “about the peace which is now being treated in Hungary, the Gran Signor does not intend to conclude it unless with that condition that everyone should have his own restituted.”⁷⁴ Césy reported about it more outspokenly: “the late Caimacam said that the Gran Signor would not make a peace at all but only if at the same time that of Germany is made concerning the palatinate.”⁷⁵

Usurpation also happened in other parts of Europe, the Valtelline and the Grisons, to which the Caimacam made reference, too. These events troubled the French, the Venetians and the Duke of Savoy to that extent that they formed a league against the Spanish. The bailo agreed with what the Caimacam said, quoted above, and added the point of view of Venice: “that *everyone enjoy his own, not usurped from others*; that this same thing was the goal of the Most Serene Republic in the league made with France and Savoy *for the liberty of the Grisons and the restitution*

⁷² Óváry, 540-541. Trovai il Caimecan non solo ben informato, ma anco molto fresco nella notizia sí delle commotioni d'Italia per le cose di Grisoni et della Valtellina, quanto di quelle d'Inghilterra et altri Principi, per il Palatinato; mostrando di saper che non solo il Re di Franza, la Repubblica et il Duca di Savoia, ma Inghilterra et Stati, et altri Principi ancora siano insieme con essi confederati contra Spagnoli et la casa d'Austria per ricuperatione dei predetti paesi, occupati da loro; et mi disse, che essendo i predetti Principi tutti amici della Casa Ottomana, et li loro fini molto giusti, che ognun habbi il suo, erano anco conformi alla mente del Gran Signor, la qual non e di concitar guerre et trbolenze nel mondo, ma ben cheognuno habbi il suo, com' e conveniente. Aggiune, che di questi affari ne havevano per il passato et hora frescamente trattato li Ambassator d'Inghilterra et dei Stati...conforme a quella di Sa Maesta et delli altri Principi che i Spagnoli et la Casa d'Astria non occupino quek d'altri

⁷³ Roe, *Negotiations*, 175, Óváry, 532.

⁷⁴ Óváry, 541. nella pace che hora i tratta in Ongaria, il Gran Signor non intende di concluderla se non con questa conditione che ad ognno sia restituito il suo

⁷⁵ BnF F 1650, 617v. le feu Caymacam avoit dit que le grand Sgr ne feroit point la payx que tout dun temps on ne fest celle Dalemagne touchant le palatinat

of the Valtelline.”⁷⁶ For the members of the league the Spanish appeared at least as odious as the Emperor. Césy characterized them as “a nations arrogant and full of artifices and naturally hostile to this empire [Ottoman] and in Christendom hated as ambitious of the estates and the good of the others.”⁷⁷

Universal Monarchy and Balance of Power

The concept of Universal Monarchy originated in the future generations’ admiration towards the Roman Empire, conceived as an *imperium*, which is supreme military and legislative power over widespread and diverse territories. The head of this empire was supposed to have a sort of power that superseded that of average kings. St. Isidore in the seventh century applied the word *monarchy* as a synonym with *imperium*. From that time on the term *monarchy* was frequently used to describe a domain of a number of different states under the monarch or emperor, who was regarded the sole source of legislative will. By the fourteenth century *monarchy* had already gained the sense of universal lordship.⁷⁸ By the late Medieval times the concept became supported by prophetic hermeneutics and astrology and appeared in the eyes of its proponents as God’s intention. For many, Dante among them, the Holy Roman Emperor embodied the monarch destined to establish peace and the rule of law in Christendom.⁷⁹ Under the reign of Charles V voices calling for universal monarchy, and together with it the supra-state authority of the Emperor and king of Spain became loud, he and his empire were conceived as the fulfillment of Daniel’s vision of the four world empire. He was supposed to defend Christendom against the Turks and Protestantism in the

⁷⁶ Óváry, 541. che ognuno goda il su, ne li venga da altri usurpato; che questo medesimo era il fine della Serenissima Repubblica nella lega fatta con Francia et Savoia, per la liberta di Grisoni, et per la restituzione della Valtellina

⁷⁷ BnF F 1650, 454v. li spagnoli una natione altiera e piena di artificii e naturalmente mal affetti a questo imperio e in Christianita odiasti come ambiciosi delli stati e beni di altri

⁷⁸ Pagden, *Lords of All the World*, 14-16.

⁷⁹ *ibid*, 26-27.

eyes of many.⁸⁰ Due to the conquests of Spain and the fact that the same dynasty ruled both empires the image of universal monarchy could be connected to both.

Obviously, voices against this image could also be heard. Whereas Canonists argued for the universal power of the Emperor or the Pope, the Thomists, Catholics themselves, refused the theory of world authority and claimed that the world was to consist of independent and equal political communities,⁸¹ and that supremacy derived from the consent of the future subjects through voluntary submission,⁸² which was obviously not the case with the type of universal monarchy pursued by the Emperor or the King of Spain. It is important to outline that the opponents did not share any of the alluded benefits of a universal monarchy, but considered it as an attempt to conquest the world and subjugate it. Many critics argued that the ruler of such a vast empire would not be capable of pursuing the well-being of his subjects,⁸³ consequently it would become tyrannical. Following the truce between Spain and the United Provinces even many of the previous supporters changed their view on Spain as a possible universal monarchy, for example the Italian princes began to have second thoughts, Savoy became closer to France.⁸⁴ Grotius termed the idea of universal rule itself stupid.⁸⁵ Naturally, for the other great powers, such as the French or the English, these aspirations meant a threat. The House of Austria and the king of Spain were accused, together and separately, of aiming at universal monarchy. Although they kept repeating the term *universal monarchy* in connection with the actions of Philip and Ferdinand, what they were concerned about was evidently safety. In their usage the adjective *universal* mostly referred to the menace threatening Christian Europe.

⁸⁰ *ibid*, 40-43.

⁸¹ Tuck, *Rights of War and Peace*, 68.

⁸² Pagden, *Lords of All the World*, 49.

⁸³ *ibid*, 54-57.

⁸⁴ Tuck, *Philosophy and Government*, 73.

⁸⁵ Pagden, *Lords of All the World*, 39.

From their perspective this threat appeared real, and they willingly verbalized it. This label sometimes referred to intentions to conquer the whole world, in which case the Ottoman Empire was portrayed as the other aspirant with whom the Emperor and the King of Spain needed to share the world. In June 1625 a mysterious traveler was approaching Constantinople about whose purpose Roe had no information, still, in his letter to the secretary of state, he expressed his conviction that the embassy served the universal aspirations of the two Habsburg-led states:

“there is dayly here expected... a gentleman...with instructions to make ouerture of a peace in the behalfe of the kyng of Spayne: hee comes armed, and is reported to prepare his welcome with greate presents, and a power of mony, with order to guild ouer all his propositions, that they may be easily swallowed: what they are, i yet know not, but the basis, *to make peace and to perswade this state, with the Austrians, as an easy work, to divide the world.*”⁸⁶

Gábor Bethlen also applied the vision of the universal ambitions of the Emperor in his argumentation when he intended to convince the Porte to allow him use the Turkish troops at the border for war or peace according to his conviction. In his letter sent to the Porte the prince “enueigheths against the Germans, and the House of Austria, that they seeke *to oppress and conquer the whole world.*”⁸⁷ Césy expressed his view about the century old ambition of the House of Austria and approved Bethlen’s decision. He said “for a hundred years his [the Emperor’s] predecessors *for the plans of their house and to aggrandize themselves at the expense of their neighbors*” acted and Bethlen made the correct decision to wage war against them to “cease the troubles that they have stirred up in Christendom.”⁸⁸

In 1628 Bethlen’s ambassador used the same argument during his visit to Roe, his successor as English resident Peter Which, and Haga, the Dutch resident, to

⁸⁶ Roe, *Negotiations*, 415.

⁸⁷ *ibid*, 423.

⁸⁸ BnF F 16151, 208v. depuis cent ans ses [Emperor’s] predecesseurs pour les dessings de leur mayson et pour saggrandir aux depends de leurs voysins...cesser les troubles quils ont excités dans la chrestienté

explain his master's new inclination to start war with Ferdinand, who "well weighing both the *encrease of power*, and the *ambition of uniuersall monarchy in the house of Austria*, wherein his owne ruine was included, that he was most readye and desirous to continue in the league, and to renewe the war."⁸⁹ As the bailo reported he was ready to "sustain the liberty and *oppose to the Monarchy of the House of Austria*."⁹⁰

The universal aspirations threatened the common good and the territory of the states directly or indirectly, and for this reason could justly be opposed. Since the universal ambitions of the king of Spain and the Emperor were taken for granted, war against them fit the concept of the fight against tyranny. Those states that were not affected directly by these ambitions could refer to either their intention to help those already offended as friends or allies or to the rightfulness of preemptive war in order that "the Spanish and the House of Austria do not occupy that of others."⁹¹ In the war rhetoric thus the image of the ambitious and unlawful Emperor and king of Spain was contrasted with the princes "that oppose to their violence."⁹² Césy expressed this common opposition to the activity of the Emperor with the metaphor of the clouds and assured the Transylvanian ambassador about the French king's resolution to help his allies: "I represent him the clouds that take shape from every side against the House of Austria in order to make it regret its *usurpations*...I also acquaint him with how much your majesty has established three big armies being resolved to *stop the oppression of his friends and allies*."⁹³

⁸⁹ Roe, *Negotiations*, 810.

⁹⁰ Óváry, 756. sostenere la libertà et opporsi alla Monarchia della Casa d'Austria

⁹¹ *ibid.*, 541. che i Spagnoli et la Casa d'Austria non occupino quel d'altri

⁹² *ibid.*, 552. che fanno opposizione alla lor violenza

⁹³ BnF F 1650, 335v. ie luy represent les nuages quy se forment de tous cotes contre la mayson Dautriche pour la fayre repentir de ses vsurpations...Je luy fays aussy scavoit comme v mnté a mys trois grandes armées sur pied bien resolué d'empêcher l'oppression de ses amys at allies

The worries about the universal aspirations were closely linked to the inherent threat to the other states. The aggrandizement of Spain and the Empire necessarily involved the weakening of the other states. This link connected the concept of universal monarchy to the relatively new principle of balance of power, even if the term itself does not appear in the letters. The idea of balance of power in foreign affairs was first applied by Guiccardini in the middle of the sixteenth century.⁹⁴ Gentili also discussed it comparing the states to atoms that are dependent on their equal distribution and on the fact that one molecule is not surpassed in any respect by another.⁹⁵ The concept became widely known by the turn of the century.⁹⁶

In the quotation above Bethlen's ambassador separated the two causes (increase of power and ambition for universal monarchy) for his master's decision, though they were obviously interlinked. We could think that the fight against the too great power of the Emperor is a logical step to avoid the establishment of a universal monarch by him. However, in the discourse the two concepts appeared as two separate points on the same line. Beside the references to the ultimate ambitions of the House of Austria, its relatively too great strength also appeared in the focus, in most cases alone. This feature in itself proved to be enough to provoke some counteraction from the other side. Bethlen's diversion was regarded "for the *too much greatness* of the House of Austria very much necessary,"⁹⁷ and his possible yielding to the Emperor would mean "*too much increase* of the power of the Emperor and the King of Spain."⁹⁸ The residents requested the Porte unanimously that the sultan permit the prince to "unite his forces with that of the princes friends of the Porte, who oppose the

⁹⁴ Tuck, *Philosophy and Government*, 95.

⁹⁵ Gentili, *De iure belli libri tres*, 65.

⁹⁶ Tuck, *Philosophy and Government*, 102-103.

⁹⁷ Óváry, 683. per la troppa grandezza della Casa d'Ausrtia molto necessarie

⁹⁸ ibid, 688. troppo accrescimento della potenza dell'Imperator et del Re di Spagna

too much power of the House of Austria and the usurpations which are done in Germany,”⁹⁹ and Césy reported the good news that “they [the Turks] have agreed to the diversion that the prince of Transylvania did in order to favor the princes armed against the enterprises of the house of Austria and suppress the too great power of the Emperor and his house.”¹⁰⁰

The labeling of the Emperor’s power as *too great* implies a view of interstate relations which permits only limited power to the states. It was not specified in the sources what the ideal amount of power of a state should be or to what extent the Emperor’s power superseded the ideal amount. What appears is the fact, as it was perceived, that with his “too great” power the Emperor could endanger the existence of other states in Christendom and threaten them with becoming a superior monarch. In this equilibrist view we can find the balance of power principle hidden, which idea is further supported by the application of the words *counterpoint* and *counterbalance* in the French and Venetian papers. Both were applied related to Bethlen’s diversion, which, by now it can be clearly seen, was regarded as the move of the greatest potential to bring about the victory of the anti-Imperialist armies. In Césy’s view “the offers of this prince who once being engaged to the service of your majesty can serve as a *big counterpoint* to the House of Austria.”¹⁰¹ The bailo talked about the Turkish supporters at the Porte, who were convinced that after “Gabor is reestablished in Hungary and the Palatine [Frederick], all the things will settle easily, which being to

⁹⁹ *ibid*, 649. unir le sue forze con quelle dei Principi amici della Porta, che ostano alla troppa grandezza di Casa d’Austria, et alle usurpationi, che in alemagna va facendo

¹⁰⁰ BnF F 1650, 606r. Ils [the Turks] ont consenty a la diversion qu’a fait le prince de Transilvanie pour fauoriser les princes armes contre les entreprises de la mayson D’austriche et empecher la trop grands puyssance de l’empr et de sa mayson

¹⁰¹ *ibid*, 511r. les offres de ce prince quy estant une foys engage au seruice de vre maté peult seruir de grand contrepoynt a la mayson Daustriche

the service of the Porte, through the *counterbalancing* of the Emperor's power."¹⁰²

The Huguenot visitor shared this image of the Prince of Transylvania. In his view the Jesuits and the King of Poland did everything to "help the House of Austria to render it the monarch of Europe."¹⁰³ He claimed that if Bethlen manages to become king, the "power of the House of Austria [could be] *counterbalanced*, and surely the liberty and the quiet of Christendom would be introduced."¹⁰⁴

Césy, as much disturbed by the approach of the secret Spanish agent as Roe, composed a summary about the Spanish goal of making peace with the Ottoman Empire and proposed the Porte not to even let the agent enter Constantinople:

"to the service of His Imperial Majesty and to the benefit of his empire to acquaint the most puissant emperor and the illustrious viziers and ministers with some forceful reasons and considerations through which it will appear that the peace which the king of Spain desires now when it is concluded will bring notable threat to this empire, and to all the ancient and true friends but asking that his Imperial Majesty and the illustrious viziers and other ministers wish...with their prudence weigh the reasons written below. Firstly, it is well-known to everyone in the world that the emperor of Germany and the King of Spain heads of the House of Austria being of the same family through marriage and they share the underserved war made to many small princes their neighbors reaching for the greatness in which they are now, for many years ago they have started aspiring for the Monarchy of the whole of Christendom. With evident designs of which they do not fail to boast daily of being able, with the united force of Christendom under their absolute Dominion turn their army against this Ottoman Empire...the present Emperor Ferdinand has made himself absolute patron of the whole of Germany and the King of Spain of Italy. And now, being that the past year...the king of France, not being able to bear for any more time the oppressions made by the King of Spain against the great princes his neighbors and friends resolved to the cause for which now is asked this peace is not for friendship or affection for peace but to secure their countries...all which has been said above proceeded from a sincere affection to the good of this empire"¹⁰⁵

¹⁰² Óváry, 527. che venendo esso Gabor rimesso in Ongria et il Palatino, s'accomoderanno facilmente tutte le cose, et essendo questo il servizio della Porta, per contrapesar la potenza dell'Imprator

¹⁰³ *ibid*, 754. aiutar la Casa d'Austria renderla monarca dell'Europa

¹⁰⁴ *ibid*, 754. contrapesata la potenza di Casa d'Austria, a che certamente si saria introdotta la liberta et la quiete della Christianita

¹⁰⁵ BnF F 1650, 451r. - 455v. al servizio di Sua Maesta Imperiale e al beneficio di suo Imperio di advertire il potentissimo Impre e li Illustrissimi Veziri e Ministri d'alcune efficaci ragioni e considerationi per le quali apparira che la pace hora dal Re di Spagna desiderata quando si concludesse, apportara notabile pregiudicio a questo imperio, e a tutti li antichi e veri amici pregando però che sua Imple Matà et li Illmi sig.i Veziri et altri Ministri vogliano...con La prudenza loro pesar le intrascritte ragioni. Primo e notorio a tutto il mondo che L'Impre di Germania e il Re di Spagna Capi della Casa d'Austria, essendo parte per matrimoni, parte per le indebite quere fatte a molti piccoli Principi Loro vicini, pervenuti alla grandezza nella quale hora si trovano hanno da molti anni in qua incomincito ad aspirare alla Monarchia di tutta La Christianita con dissegno evidente di che non mancano di vantarsi giornalmente di poter con le forze unite della Christianita sotto loro assoluto Dominio conuertir Le Loro armi contra questo Imperio Ottomanico...il moderno Imperatore Ferdinando si hauerebbe fatto

It is noteworthy that the very same argumentation was already applied fifty years earlier by French foreign policy. In 1572 the French justified their relationship with the Turks saying that it was made to “counterbalance the excessive grandeur of the house of Austria that tries to achieve the tyranny of all the Christendom.”¹⁰⁶

According to the view that appears in the English papers beside the temporal aspirations of Spain and the Emperor, the Christian world was also threatened by the spiritual ambitions of the Pope and the Jesuits. It is important to emphasize that it was not the Catholicism itself of these actors which resulted in their accusation of universal rule but their ambitions and the methods they applied in order to achieve their goals as perceived by their opponents. This distinction clearly emerges from the letters related to the case of the bishopric of Smirna.

The French resident, Césy, actively participated in the representation of Catholic goals in the Ottoman Empire, as the protector of Christians, a title which Francis I invented for himself a hundred years before to justify his close connections with the Porte.¹⁰⁷ Césy clearly equated the interests of Christians with that of the Pope and even more with the Jesuits, and restlessly searched the opportunity to advance them. Naturally the advancement of those interests meant the regression of the interests of other denominations and even of other Catholic orders. The English resident considered all this an extreme, deriving from the ambition of the Pope and the Jesuits to expand their authority until they accomplish universal rule. He detected this motivation behind the activity connected to the archbishopric of Smirna. Upon the

assoluta padrona di tutta la Germania, e il Re di Spagna della Italia. Hora anco, essendo che l'anno passato il ...Re di Franza non potendo piu lungo tempo supportare le oppressioni fatte dal Re di Spagna contra grandi Principi soi vicini et amici, ha risoluto la causa per laquale hora domanda questa pace non e per amicitia ne per affett:ne alla pace, ma per assicurar li suoi paesi ...tutto quello che fu sopradetto procedendo da vn sincero affetto al bene di questo Imperio.

¹⁰⁶ Poumarède, *Justifier l'injustifiable: l'alliance turque au miroir de la chrétienté*, 233. contrepezer l'excessive grandeur de la maison d'Austriche qui tente de parvenir a la tyrannie de toute la chrestienté

¹⁰⁷ *ibid.*, 242-243.

inability of the archbishop to fulfill his tasks, the appointment of a substitute was under consideration in Rome. Roe and the Venetian bailo would have welcomed the archbishop of Scio, while Césy, “a jesuited man” as Roe called him,¹⁰⁸ would have preferred to see another man in that position.¹⁰⁹ Roe asked his peer in Venice to persuade the duke of Savoy to try to achieve at Rome that their man be appointed, and the Venetian bailo also attempted to intervene for his sake. Roe explained to Wake his reasons for getting engaged in this question. One was the friendliness of this man with the English merchants, the other his plan to outweigh the influence of the French ambassador in the matters of Christians in the Ottoman Empire “wherof he takes protection as a nuncio, building new monarchyes of straw and stubble, hauing proceeded so far as to attempt to bring in a suffraganeo apostolico¹¹⁰ to reside here, to create new bishops in euery corner and to oppress the Greeke church.”¹¹¹ It is noteworthy that Roe used the term *oppression*, which belongs to the vocabulary of liberty. No wonder in another letter the term tyranny, which offended even Catholic believers, also emerged: “If we preuayle for our bishop, we cutt off the French and Jesuites strength and hopes: if not, we must use more sharpe remedyes, rather then *to suffer the tyranny of their faction*, that doth oppress eauen all the honest and moderate Romanists.”¹¹²

The fiercest battle between the French ambassador and the Protestant residents plus the bailo over the influence of the Jesuits was fought over the see of the patriarch of Constantinople. Roe perceived, again, the endeavor of Césy and the Jesuits as an example of the universal plans of Rome. The patriarch, Cyrill Lukaris

¹⁰⁸ Roe, *Negotiations*, 247.

¹⁰⁹ *ibid*, 512.

¹¹⁰ a suffragan bishop is who heads a diocese which is part of a larger ecclesiastical province

¹¹¹ Roe, *Negotiations*, 654.

¹¹² *ibid*, 670.

showed some inclination to Protestant doctrines, dedicated his book to James I and sent promising young Greeks to study in England.¹¹³ Césy, and the Jesuits worked hard to remove him from the patriarchal see and replace him with a candidate lenient towards Catholicism. The quotation below is from a letter of Roe to the Archbishop of Canterbury written at the time of the temporary removal of Lukaris from his chair:

“This wee know and may haue our turne to make use of yt, that the Pope nourisheth a Greeke church in Rome, who are his emissaries into these parts, as his Jesuits are into Europe. This man [who became the patriarch] hath promised submission or at least good correspondence with yt; and the whole plott is that by his meanes the metropolitan seates shalbe, in a few yeares, filled with those of the Romish faction, and by degrees, that doctrine sowed in the church and finall *obedience* in the end. Your grace may now see the *vniversal practice* of those engines; no church shalbe safe that is not theirs; Germany, France, Bohemia hath lately felt it. Greece is now in project, and God defend thy little flock in England. Who is so blynd as not to discern these miners? Here it may bee my happines to repay them; for if any change, and this vizier cannot last in good tymes, much less in these, I am confident to restore him...I beseech your grace, acquaynt his majestie with this storye that he may see the generall working; it is not one kyngdome, but *an vniversall monarchy that is the ayme of Antichrist*...It may bee this generall persecution is good phisicque for the church; for which a wise heathen [Tacit] gaue thancks, *Benignitati deum gratiam referendam, ne ritus sacrorum inter ambigua culti per prospera oblitterarentur*. Yet I must have leave to pray for the peace and prosperity of Sion.”¹¹⁴

The universal ambition of the Pope and the Jesuits, and the universal ambition of the Emperor and the King of Spain harmonize and mean a general threat to the rest of the world in the eyes of the Protestants. As for France, the situation is more complex. While Césy, as we have seen, shared the view about the universal ambitions of the Emperor and the King of Spain as a representative of his master, he wholeheartedly supported the Pope and the Jesuits and opposed the other residents from this respect. His temporal and religious activities were clearly separated in his conduct, even if he personally had some difficulty with this strict division. In one of his letters he first termed Roe and Haga the “heretic ambassadors” and then he

¹¹³ Runciman, Steven. *The Great Church in Captivity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), 259-273.

¹¹⁴ Roe, *Negotiations*, 147. the quotation means: “taking care that the rites observed during times of peril may not be forgotten in prosperity”, *Annals*, 11.14

changed it to the ambassadors of England and Holland.¹¹⁵ On the basis of these phenomena the question rightfully raises: what place did religious considerations have in interstate affairs?

The Role of Religion

The Thirty Years War is generally called the last religious war in Europe. True, religious considerations did have an important place in it. The binding force attributed to the common religion appeared in the Protestant correspondence regularly. Protestantism was regarded in the papers as a common faith, regardless of the differences between its various denominations. Thus in the papers Anglicans and Calvinists are presented as professing the same faith. The fact being of the same protestant religion served in the rhetoric as the foundation of closer bonds, sincerity and reliability. Roe already in 1623 wrote to Elizabeth about Bethlen's inherent need for alliance arguing that the prince "in all his ways...has only sought out some on whom to rely, it were a good council to reconcile and take him home among those of his own religion."¹¹⁶ He continued emphasizing this idea to the extent that he suggested Bethlen should marry a Protestant princess, for example a sister of the elector of Brandenburg.¹¹⁷ When he learned the marriage might occur Roe expected it "will be a great tie vpon him and much reputation and strength to the religion and general cause."¹¹⁸ The ambassador of Bethlen underlined that his master's purpose with the wedding was the satisfaction of his conscience and "to engrass himself into the good opinion of the princes of the religion."¹¹⁹ Bethlen exploited this opportunity

¹¹⁵ BnF F 1650, 143 les Ambassadeurs d'Angleterre et Hollande

¹¹⁶ Roe, *Negotiations*, 239.

¹¹⁷ *ibid.*, 304.

¹¹⁸ *ibid.*, 458.

¹¹⁹ *ibid.*, 472.

during 1625, the year filled with preparation preceding his attack against Ferdinand, and he frequently made references to the common tie of religion.

In November 1625 Roe saw the fruit of his endeavor ripe, in his letter to the secretary of state he said about Bethlen, perhaps for the first and definitely for the last time during his embassy that “I am persuaded the prince does treat sincerely.”¹²⁰ He also wrote a letter to the prince in which he described the good effects of this marriage: “The aduise of your highnes purpose to marry with a princess of so high estate and alliance doth much comfort those of the same oppressed religion; and as it is a demonstration of your syncerity and wisdom, so it willbee a great seale and assurance to all your highnes frends.”¹²¹ About these friends he says at another time that they “by our common bond of religion and faith will not fayle yow, and that cause, into which for the publicke good yow haue entered.”¹²²

The discourse about common religion conveyed the message that it functioned as the seal of devotion to the cause and mutual trustworthiness. However, one cannot escape the impression that, at least that importantly, it served as a channel through which political intentions were expressed and appropriate conduct required from the partner. It can be especially sensed in the great emphasis this bond between Bethlen and England received. For example, the ambassador of the prince constantly outlined the “only respect he [Bethlen] bear to his [king of England] person, as the protector of the same true religion that he professed”¹²³ and showed himself slightly offended by not having received any concrete answer from him. Roe, on the other hand, portrayed the king offended because “since there was more likelihood that for the common

¹²⁰ *ibid.*, 473.

¹²¹ *ibid.*, 479.

¹²² *ibid.*, 564.

¹²³ *ibid.*, 471.

interest of religion and his majesty's particular ends of restoring his brother and sister, his majesty would sooner hearken to his offers than France," but Bethlen contacted the king of France first.¹²⁴ Both of them referred to the common religion that should have moved the other to act differently. And both of them felt the obligation to present some acceptable excuse for not doing so, which they performed.

Regarding the other side of the coin, that is the view of a partner of a different religion, the Archbishop of Canterbury, a biased representative of Protestantism out of office, expressed his doubts, also shared by the king of Denmark, about the reliability of the French King in the war based on his not being of the "reformed religion":

"I feare wee shall have no great coniunction from them in our warres, whiche the king of Denmarke did foresee, and intimate, wishing that wee should rest on none but suche as were of the reformed religion. I do much suspect the issue of that whiche is, and the rather because the Frenche leave all other actions to oppresse their protestants at home; and wee are not able to prevaile to turne them from that designe."¹²⁵

The fact that the French king was Catholic, and even more his endeavors against his Protestant subjects, threatened with the opposite of those benefits that common religion secured. It automatically resulted in the possible lack of mutual good will, reliability and sincerity. The same was the case with the Emperor: Roe warned the Prince of Transylvania not to adhere to his party "of whose friendship and religion your highness can never be secure."¹²⁶ Not surprisingly, the protestant ambassadors consciously avoided mentioning the religious grievances suffered and the religious goals of their fight in their negotiations with the French and the Venetian resident. The vocabulary of liberty and fight against tyranny perfectly served as a common cause with them. For this reason, the ambassador of Bethlen changed his discourse in his negotiations with the catholic residents, as the English reported:

¹²⁴ *ibid.*, 501.

¹²⁵ *ibid.*, 460.

¹²⁶ *ibid.*, 352.

“though hee vsed the same generalities to the French and Venice residents, of his propenseness to the publique cause, yet hee had not opened himselfe so fully, nor was it conuenient to them to mention the respects of religion, contrary to their profession, which hee had chaunged into the termes of iustice.”¹²⁷

The Porte in 1622 perceived the war in Christendom as a religious one. The grand vizier explained that the Porte, beside its hostility towards the Emperor, would side with the Protestants also for religious matters. Césy reported what he was told by the English resident about his visit to the grand vizier:

“I learned...that during the past days the ambassador of England visited [the grand visir] they had various discourses on the subject of the wars of Christendom between the Catholics and the protestants and the ambassador wanted to know what the resolution of this Port was connected to the succors requested by the Transylvanian and the count of Tour [Turn], the grand vizier answered him that this decision did not depend on him alone, but they do not have to doubt at all his good will towards the protestants of whose religion and belief is closer to that of the Muslims than that of the Catholics who depend on the Pope and who adore a bit of Pasque. These are the very words that were to me faithfully reported – which are the sentiments of this vizier.”¹²⁸

Quite interestingly, the reference to the relative closeness of Protestantism and Islam was not new. The same argumentation was applied by Robert Cecil about fifty years earlier. Cecil declared then the possible establishment of a closer, even military relationship with the Ottomans against Spain to be fully acceptable.¹²⁹ He suggested that the two parties could combine their forces and attack the Most Catholic King on the basis that both of their religions denounced the adoration of images.

The concept of the war as a religious war at its core was characteristic for the Catholic Church, especially for the Jesuits who filled important positions as confessors of the King of France, the Prince of Bavaria and the Emperor. At the

¹²⁷ *ibid.*, 472.

¹²⁸ BnF F 1650, 155v. Ja appris...que ces iours passes l'ambr d'Angleterre faisant sa visite [at the grand visir] ils avaient plusieurs discours sur le subiect des guerres de Chrestienté entre les Catholiques et protestants et l'Ambr uoulant scavoir quelle estoit la resolution de cette Porte touchant le secours que demande la Transiuain et le Comte de la tour, le gd Visir luy respondu que cette deliberation ne dependoit pas de luy seul, mais quilz ne debussent point daultres de sa bonne volonté pour les protestants desquils la Religion et croyance estant plus voisine de celle des Moussulmans que celle des Catholiques qui dependoient du Pape et qui adorerent Un morceau de Pasce. Ces sont les propres termes qui m'ont este fidellment raportés – qils son les sentiments de ce visir

¹²⁹ Horniker, Arthur Leon. “William Harborne and the Beginning of Anglo-Turkish Diplomatic and Commercial Relations” *The Journal of Modern History* 14, no. 3 (1942): 289-316, 306.

beginning of the war the language of holy war gradually started to appear in Vitelleschi's correspondence with Germany and France. According to this Ferdinand enjoyed a special divine providence and calling from God. This language began to be applied to Maximilian, too after White Mountain. The Pope, Gregory XV employed this language in the case of Louis XIII's campaign against the Huguenots, but ideas of holy war never caught on in France, which tells a lot about the differences in approach.¹³⁰ The difference in approach is also visible if one compares the tone of Sir Philip Sidney's speech to the troops in 1584 before their intervention in the Netherlands with the tone of the diplomatic letters from the 1620s. Sidney animated the English soldiers by saying "the enemy were men of false religion, enemies of God and his church."¹³¹ The two examples display a language use which has religious war in its focus. The rhetoric applied in the diplomatic letters differs greatly from this. Naturally, the source of dissimilarity can be easily detected in the various natures of the situations in which the language was applied. However, the fact that religion as a motivation for war was largely abandoned, reinforces the view about the dominating secular character of interstate relations. It was quite frequently applied in the diplomatic correspondence between Protestants. But even then it was combined with the language of liberty connected to the cause of Germany as it can be seen in Roe's letter to the Prince of Transylvania. The letter was sent with the purpose to convince Bethlen to decrease his demands towards the Porte: "I refer the moderation of them to your wisdom and good affection formerly expressed to the liberty of Germany, and our religion oppressed, for which there are many crowns prepared in heaven."¹³² The official English standpoint described in the instructions given to Buckingham quoted

¹³⁰ Bireley, Robert. *The Jesuits and the Thirty Years War: Kings, Courts, and Confessors*. (Cambridge, UK; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 61- 63.

¹³¹ Tyerman, Christopher. *England and the Crusades 1095-1588* (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 1988), 367.

¹³² Roe, *Negotiations*, 396.

above displayed some religious concern, which was presented as complementary reason for war. It could be observed that religion itself did not occur in the official language present in the text of the treaty of The Hague quoted above.

While the interest of religion took the lead in the case of the patriarch of Constantinople and the constant fight around it can be regarded as a manifestation of religious controversy on a full scale, the case is different with the *cause of Germany*. There the *cause of religion* seems to have constituted an important, but unofficial component of the language connected to the war. It is also important to remember that just war could not be initiated for religious reasons, which logically resulted in keeping this aspect in the background in a culture in which deference to norms, at least verbally, was of crucial importance.

Despite all the reservations described so far, in the diplomatic letters there is no sign of any worry about the non-Protestant religion of a possible ally. Neither France, nor Venice was suspected less reliable in themselves, only the “instigations of the Jesuits”¹³³ might have crossed the common plans. Roe, despite complaining about his master’s being the second in the row, considered Bethlen’s approaching the king of France as a sign that “God has disposed this affair in a more right way.”¹³⁴ Therefore it can be stated that common religion did not appear as a prerequisite of any cooperation in interstate relations, its presence seems to have served as an added value, a bonus in itself that was expected to result in making the association for the common benefit more familiar and thus stronger.

¹³³ *ibid*, 143-144.

¹³⁴ *ibid*, 396. Roe is expressing his opinion that Bethlen should directly negotiate with the princes about a possible alliance rather than their ambassadors in Constantinople

As it has been mentioned, the concepts applied to talk about the offenses against Protestantism belonged to the vocabulary of liberty. Strictly speaking the controversy did not root in the clash of religious doctrines, as it should happen in case of a truly religious war, instead it arose from the unjust oppression of rights to practice religion, and the war was waged for the restitution of these rights against a tyrant. Roe informed Bethlen about the general preparation in Germany for the war and included the news about the elector of Saxony, a Lutheran, who had previously supported the Emperor but by then, out of “the feare of the oppression of his religion and his colloquy with the marquis of Brandenburg hath altered him, at least to a neutrality.”¹³⁵ The opponents of Ferdinand regarded their war against him as a just war against a tyrant who had broken the just laws and treaties and was too excessive in his authority. That is why the Protestants had to defend their just cause and their fight took the form of a fight against tyranny. The words of the count of Turn, reported by Roe, well illustrate this duality:

“since the conclusion, the emperour had kept no article of the agreement, but, contrariwise, oppressed all the protestants, and confiscated many, refusing restitution, and many such other things to which he was bound by the treaty; aggrauating vehemently the common-place of the proceeding of the house of Austria, to root out all those of the religion their opposites with fire and sword, and so to monarchize Germany...euen those of Hungary, that hade pressed the peace, did now resolute, rather to dye in the warre, then endure the slavery.”¹³⁶

Roe, full of enthusiasm on the peak of events in 1626, a few weeks before Bethlen’s second attack against the Emperor, also combined the value of liberty and justice with the fate of the Protestants:

“There rests nothing to the perfection of so many labours, and to the satisfaction of so many princes, and the discharge of our owne honor engaged, then to beginn that glorious work, which proclaymeth restitution to the oppressed in their estates and freedome to the tyrannized in their consciences and liberty to religion”¹³⁷

¹³⁵ *ibid.*, 352.

¹³⁶ *ibid.*, 82-83.

¹³⁷ *ibid.*, 541.

The Role of God

Talking about religion attention should also be devoted to the role attributed to God as it appears in the papers. The Almighty was regularly referred to, but these references mostly consisted of prayers or desires connected to the future. God was definitely presented as the main actor in the formation of events, and the general ends of his will were clear for all believers (though differed according to the denomination). The anti-imperialists were convinced that God supported their goals, because He also wished to restore justice. In the Protestant view beside the unjustness of the Emperor's and his followers' deeds God had other reasons to side with the anti-Emperor party, which was his care for "his little flock"¹³⁸ and the cause of religion, as well as the peace of Christendom. Since he supported these goals, the happy conjuncture of Protestant armies was due to his providence.¹³⁹ All the goals of God were represented at one point by the endeavor of Bethlen in Roe's perception: "hee will take arms; which God prosper, for the generall peace of Christendome, and the humbling of those that ambitiously disturb it."¹⁴⁰

Roe and his correspondents believed that Protestantism was the true religion. Still, this conviction did not mean for them that God would give all help to the cause of Protestantism in the war. No one questioned God's overall goodwill to Protestantism, but it was not expected to necessarily manifest itself in successes according to human standards, like a won battle. This attitude was most probably triggered by the fact that the Emperor's troops tended to be victorious in the battlefields. When hope revived, the assistance of God was immediately expected. This was the case when the good news about the unification of the two armies led by

¹³⁸ *ibid.*, 113.

¹³⁹ *ibid.*, 613.

¹⁴⁰ *ibid.*, 524.

Mansfeld and the duke of Brunswick against the forces of Ferdinand reached Carleton. The letter writer expressed his hope about their success with God's help: "both armyes being ioyned together, make a strong body able to give battle to their enemyes and (God assisting) beate them soundly."¹⁴¹

When their enemy had more fortune in the war, the Protestants did not see a contradiction between God's supporting the just cause of Germany and the cause of Protestantism on the one hand and still let it suffer on the other. The troubles had to be endured for the happy end. Roe tried to console Elizabeth in her exile with the following words: "Most excellent Lady, be your owne queene; banish all despaires and feares; be assured the cause in which you suffer cannot perish: if God had not planted it, it had long since bene rooted out."¹⁴² He reacted similarly to the unfortunate state of the affairs of Protestantism: "I cannott prophecy, butt I am confident that God will nott lett his church be trampled on, though he chaictices it a while."¹⁴³

Behind this approach lay more than a necessary reconciliation of two, seemingly opposing direction in God's behavior. The first clause in the latter quotation "I cannot prophecy" well exemplifies the uncertainty about God's intentions in the short run. He appears to have been perceived unfathomable for the human beings. Despite that God intervened in the matters of men and states no one could penetrate his actual will and intentions only his general end. It was him who deposed rulers, saved or ceased monarchies¹⁴⁴ and used tools regardless of the ethical norms of men, if he wished so. A good example for the latter is Roe's reaction to the idea of the engagement of Turkish troops in the war: "which is most strange the Turks professe

¹⁴¹ *ibid*, 73.

¹⁴² *ibid*, 135.

¹⁴³ *ibid*, 59.

¹⁴⁴ *ibid*, 764.

the giuing of these aydes for the release and protection of the protestant princes and religion oppressed by the house of Austria. The Turks take upp our quarrell? I know they haue other ends; butt what end God hath who can foresee?”¹⁴⁵ Similarly, in Roe’s wording it was God who provided Bethlen with another friend and supporter at the Porte after the death of Georgi Mehmet.¹⁴⁶

The unfathomability of God’s plans constituted the foundation of His image. He knew everything, as the scrutator cordium¹⁴⁷, and people had to accept his decisions. His decisions might result in disadvantageous events, which might hinder human designs. Among other things Roe excuses the failure of the king of England to answer Bethlen’s offer with reference to the “the hand of God, which has interrupted many consultations of great importance.”¹⁴⁸ This faith had two sides. On the one hand it performed a perfectly humble acceptance of God’s unpredictable activity which in a number of cases is incomprehensible for human beings, on the other it could apply the will of God to everything happening around and, with this approach, it could arbitrarily label events as supported by God. The interpretation of God’s will happened through common sense (God will not let his church oppressed) and the ethical norms of the period (God himself follows the norms, for example the need for a just cause to start a war).

¹⁴⁵ *ibid*, 158.

¹⁴⁶ *ibid*, 536.

¹⁴⁷ *ibid*, 123.

¹⁴⁸ *ibid*, 478.

Interest

Without doubt self-centered attitude or the evaluation of possible actions in light of their benefit to the actor himself were never absent from the minds and actions of statesmen and princes. However, it is a question to what extent they could be acknowledged on the discursive level or considered as driving forces in an abstract sense. The fortunate outcome of an act from the actor's point of view, both financially and in a wider sense, was labeled either *profit* or *benefit* until the middle of the sixteenth century, expressions which can be found both in the diplomatic correspondence of Ralph Sadler from the 1540s and in the residents' letters in the 1620s, without any apparent shift in meaning. Sadler described how he attempted to convince James V, king of Scotland, the nephew of Henry VIII, saying: "the king's majesty your uncle doth advise you of those things, both for your honor and profit, and proceeding of an entire zeal and love, and affection that his grace beareth towards you."¹ Roe, commenting on Bethlen's advantage upon the emperor uses profit in the same sense, what is more, it is attached to honor again, similarly to the usage found in the Sadler papers: "The truth is hee [Bethlen] hath gotten a great advantage vpon the emperour which hee may vse to *his honour and the profitt* of his frends."²

The adjective, *profitable*, can also be read in both sources from time to time. Robert Cecil, in his memorial prepared for Queen Elizabeth in 1559, analytically discusses the question whether England should help the Scots against the French or not, as he puts it: "whether it be meeter or more profitable to England to continue the

¹ Sadler, *The State Papers and Letters of Sir Ralph Sadler*, Vol. 1. 32.
² Roe, *Negotiations*, 192.

Scots in their strength and defence than to leave them.”³ Roe applied the word in the same sense in order to convey his opinion about the peace made between Bethlen and the Emperor in 1603, which is “neither safe nor profitable to this empire.”⁴ The Venetian papers also used both forms of the word, the Venetian ambassador in England strongly believed in Bethlen’s successful attack on the Emperor “to the profit of the common good”⁵ and the bailo called Bethlen’s resolutions “profitable to the common good.”⁶ It is noteworthy that the term was attached in the same manner both when talking about an individual’s profit, the profit of a state or the profit of the common good. This phenomenon reinforces the statement that the political language of interstate relations followed the language used in interpersonal relations.

Similarly to profit and its derivatives, benefit also expressed a positive outcome of an affair, something due to which a status or situation is improved. Sadler undertook the persuasion of some Scottish earls to side with the English king, rather than the French “for the good perfection of such things as might tend to the benefit and wealth of both these realms.”⁷ Roe prayed to God for the improvement of the situation of Elizabeth: “I beseech Almighty God ripen and direct his counsellors to his [James I] glory, and the benefitt of your Majestie.”⁸ The ambassador of Bethlen explained to the bailo “that the representatives of the princes had a meeting at The Hague during the past months and many things were established to the benefit of the

³ Sadler, *The State Papers and Letters of Sir Ralph Sadler*, Vol. 1, 382.

⁴ Roe, *Negotiations*, 304.

⁵ Óváry, 797. a profitto del buon publico

⁶ ibid, 604. proficue al ben commune

⁷ Sadler, *The State Papers and Letters of Sir Ralph Sadler*, Vol. 1, 133.

⁸ Roe, *Negotiations*, 136.

common cause.”⁹ And the bailo shared the general view of the anti-Imperialist part about “how much public benefit was the move of the prince.”¹⁰

These examples display the ongoing existence of the old humanist vocabulary with the same senses connected to it. This cluster of words was complemented with *interest*, which must have entered the vocabulary some time during the second half of the 16th century. The word itself did not constitute such a basic component of the political vocabulary in the 1540s as it did in the 1620’s, and at the few instances when it was applied it conveyed different senses from what the residents in Constantinople attributed to it. In Ralph Sadler’s papers interest appeared to have basically two meanings: the attraction to something interesting and the fee charged by a lender to a borrower for the use of borrowed money. The early seventeenth century meaning of interest is clearly missing from the correspondence, while we can find there all the basic terms of the humanist vocabulary from affection to tyranny and from zeal to usurpation.

References to interest thus were not present in the political discourse dominating the middle of the 16th century; while in the letters of the early seventeenth century diplomats interest was frequently applied. This phenomenon can be connected to the emergence of a new approach to the themes and concepts of the early Renaissance, which the secondary literature calls new humanism. The expression “old humanism” designates Renaissance Ciceronianism that ruled the intellectual life of the early part of the period while the expression “new humanism” was invented in order

⁹ Óváry, 632. essendo in un convento de Ministri di Principi tenuto all’Aia li mesi passati state stabilite molte cose a beneficio della causa commune

¹⁰ ibid, 684. quanto publico beneficio sia stata la mossa del Principe

to differentiate the proponents of Tacitism and in general the critics of Ciceronianism active in the later sixteenth and seventeenth century.¹¹

As it appears, the vocabulary of affections, together with the rest of the discourse building on the old humanist tradition continued to dominate the political language in interstate relations and existed side by side with the relatively newly introduced concept of interest. The first application of *interest* as a key term in politics in the theoretical literature is attributed to Guicciardini.¹² In the *Ricordi*, he presents self-interest (*interesse proprio*) as a condemnable motivation for action, which deviates men from their natural inclination to the good.¹³ But gradually, together with the word itself a different view of human and political affairs became acknowledged and elevated to a level of abstractness, which was certainly missing from the old discourse in regard of the focus on the advantage. Sadler, for example, described certain political steps as *expedient*¹⁴ but not once did he write the word *expediency*. By the early seventeenth century both the concept and the view together with its abstract character seem to have found their place in the language of politics. The process of turning away from the previous approach to man and his worldly affairs can be detected on the theoretical level as well. Self-preservation became acknowledged as the main driving force behind human actions and the beginning of men's forming society began to be seen rather in a self-interested decision than the natural innate disposition to sociability described in the first chapter.¹⁵

¹¹ Tuck, *Philosophy and Government*, 120.

¹² *ibid.*, 39.

¹³ Guicciardini, Francesco (Rubinstein, Nicolai ed.). *Maxims and Reflections*, (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992) 99.

¹⁴ Sadler, *The State Papers and Letters of Sir Ralph Sadler*, Vol. 1. 183. "Your highness shall now have the opportunity to confer with them, both for the better attaining of your godly purpose, either by peace or war, as to your wisdom shall seem most expedient."

¹⁵ Pagden, Anthony, "The Genealogies of European Cosmopolitanism and the Legacy of European Universalism," in Asch, Ronald G, Eckart, Wulf, Wrede, Martin (Hg.) eds. *Frieden Und*

The normative language of early seventeenth century interstate relations did not fully mirror this change of view. It firmly conveyed the image of human communities based on virtue and friendship. However, the concept of interest was introduced in a way that it did not undermine this value system. An explanation for the smooth coexistence of the two languages can be the difference in view and approach itself, which did not need to gain space at the expense of some loss in the traditional language but could simply be added to it. Let us not forget that as long as the objects of zeal described in the previous chapter meant goals to be achieved, *interest* was not a goal to be obtained, but rather an aspect that defined what the goal should be.

The ambassadors' use of the word was identical regarding its possible senses, but the frequency of its application differed considerably according to the varying proportion of the old humanist vocabulary and the interest-based discourse in their overall language. As it could be seen from the previous chapters the English resident applied the traditional humanist vocabulary to a considerably greater degree than the other two, for whom it appeared mainly as a compulsory stylistic ornament in formal situations. Consequently, his interest-centered argumentation was well balanced with the humanist type. The other two ambassadors referred to *interest* much more frequently and in a significantly plainer manner than he did, leaving substantially more space to the former than the latter. This phenomenon is well exemplified by the contrast between the way Roe presented the English king's fight for the Palatinate (aiming at the common good, waged against tyranny etc) and the one in which the bailo characterized the English standpoint. He reported about Roe's new attempt to ask for instruction saying "this ambassador of England had written to his king in order to have order to disturb the peace which is being treated between the prince Gabor and

the Emperor, as something dangerous to His Majesty's interests in the recovery of the Palatinate."¹⁶ Similarly, Césy also applied interest in his description of the same situation. He reported that even without new instructions, Roe will still "prevent a design so contrary to the interest of his country."¹⁷

The explanation for the phenomenon might be that the English papers present us with an earlier stage of the coexistence of the two discourses, when the concept of interest had already entered the vocabulary and the old concepts were also actively applied for the labeling of actions, events and intentions. It is not surprising given the fact that Roe, and most probably the majority of his peers, was a graduate of the Magdalen Hall, Oxford which at that time provided the students with a quintessentially humanist education.¹⁸ Roe in his letters regularly displayed this humanist background, for example through the extensive use of quotations from antique and humanist authors. Such intentions are completely missing from the Venetian dispatches and Césy very rarely feels the need to display his humanist education.¹⁹ The French and especially the Venetian papers appear to represent a stage where the new vocabulary has already pushed the old one into the realm of formalities and official discourse. It is also possible that the reason for this variety stems from the different political cultures at the various centers.

¹⁶ Óváry, 543. havendo per il passato questo Signor Ambassator d'Inghilterra scritto al suo Re, per haver ordine di sturbar la pace, che all' hora si trattava tra il Principe Gabor et l'Imperatore, come pregiudicale agli interessi di Sua Maesta nella ricuperatione del Palatinato

¹⁷ BnF F 1650, 497r. empêcher un dessain sy contraire aux intherest de sa patrie

¹⁸ Malcolm, Noel. "Hobbes's Early Career" in Hobbes, Thomas (Malcolm, Noel ed). *Reason of State, Propaganda, and the Thirty Years' War: An Unknown Translation by Thomas Hobbes*. 1-15.(Oxford, UK:Oxford University Press, 2007), 2-3.

¹⁹ The only instance I read was the first line of the Aeneid, Arma virumque cano

Interest and the old value system

The interest of a state became a point of reference taken for granted, even if what the concept meant exactly was not defined. Botero claimed that “it should be taken for certain that in the decisions made by princes interest will always override any other argument. And therefore he who treats with princes should put no trust in friendship, kinship, treaty not any other tie which has no basis in interest.”²⁰ Although most probably the vast majority shared this view; the rhetoric of interstate relations did not allow it to appear openly. For this reason interest could be smoothly integrated in the language, far from being either at the top or at the bottom of the value spectrum.

Whenever it was a matter of choice whether affection or interest should be presented as the decisive motivating factor behind an act, it was unquestionably the former that was selected. The most telling evidence for that is the whole vocabulary of affections itself used in interstate relations, where only the continual expression of the presence of strong emotions distinguished the system in its outlook from a relationship deriving from mutual interests. As it has been demonstrated, the efforts made to exhibit the emotional origins of motivation, and thus simultaneously to diminish the role of the utilitarian component, were great. The fact that the Venetian and the French sources exhibit a clear distinction between the compliance with the official language used towards other states, especially when referring to the common good, and their own wording further testifies the superiority of the Ciceronian humanist value system which thus everyone felt compulsory to follow.

The inferior status assigned to interest as contrasted to emotional motives appeared in everyday practice as well. During the 1620s recurrent fears arose among

²⁰ Botero, Giovanni. *The Reason of State* Rare Masterpieces of Philosophy and Science (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1956) 41.

the English, French, Dutch and Venetian residents concerning the possible reconciliation of Spain and the Ottoman Empire. When the arrival of the Spanish agent or ambassador mentioned in the previous chapter was approaching, the four residents alerted each other supposing he was a secret messenger from the king of Spain. Already equipped with some experience about the futility of gaining the long term support of the officials at the Porte, they resolved to try to persuade the clergy. Beside its prominent position in the council, the fact that the arguments proposed by the clergy were interpreted as originating in their devotion and wisdom, rather than any interest, added a lot to the value of their performance:

“These men stand out of the way of ordinary bribes and are seldome sought vnto in state affaires by strangers. and how-euer they change offices yearly, yet they fall not like others; they are still respected and reuerenced and retorne againe to their charges once in three years; and whatsoeuer shall proceed from them wilbee lesse suspected of *interest*, but rather esteemed pure *zeale* and *wisdome*.”²¹

The same concern about the weak effect of advice that openly roots in self-interest and a conviction about the more probable success of one arising from a less corrupted fountain appeared in the case of other important issues, such as the complex task of influencing the decisions of the Porte concerning the matter of peace or war between the Sultan and the Emperor, or the formation of the Ottoman opinion regarding the moves of Gábor Bethlen. In connection with these issues both the extraordinary and the resident ambassadors of the Prince of Transylvania repeatedly asked for the support of the residents of the friendly states in their dealing with the Porte. They actively supported the common goals, but never too directly. When Bethlen's ambassador sought Roe's help in persuading the Porte to allow Bethlen break the treaty with the Emperor and ally with the anti-Imperialist powers, he expressed his opinion saying “that which hee hath required of us.... he is better able to

²¹ Roe, *Negotiations*, 490-491.

effect than wee; for our counsellors will bee suspected of *interest*, but his accepted for *faythfull advice*.”²² He regularly voiced his opinion that it was the Prince of Transylvania who was best able to preserve the good will of the officials at the Porte towards the common goals, claiming that “our perswasions were suspected of *interest* or partialitye.”²³ Zorzi, the bailo, also reported in a very similar situation that the residents decided to follow the same procedure, being confident that the requests of Bethlen “will succeed with the Caimacam more as proposed and as his own than as ours.”²⁴

The quotations imply that the inferiority of interest to emotional motives also derived from practical considerations. Giving advice out of interest was considered suspicious in terms of the truthfulness and the reliability of the message, a crucial concern in interstate relations. According to this interpretation self-interest was likely to distort reality, a probability which the listener needed to take into account. Consequently, the degree of the persuasiveness of the speaker in such a case was considerably weakened. For this reason it was advisable to apply such channels for the communication of views that appeared to care about the well-being of the addressee out of zeal, wisdom or faithfulness without any focus on one’s own advantages. All the maneuvers used by the residents in matters that directly connected to the policy they represented were necessary in their view, because the Porte would have considered their overt steps simply interest-based, and thus less worthy of consideration. This thinking allowed for and acknowledged the role of *interest* in political decisions. *Interest* was not regarded as morally wrong, only inferior to the motivations based on devotion – both from ethical and practical points of view.

²² *ibid*, 388.

²³ *ibid*, 657.

²⁴ Óváry, 582. che riusciranno al Caimacan piu a proposito e proprii che i nostri

However, if interest and the objects of zeal could be harmonized, the two considerably reinforced each other, as in the case of *common interest*.

Common interest

It seems highly likely that the expression *common interest* was formed following the pattern of *common good* and *public interest* was coined after *public good*. This assumption is supported by the identical adjectives that precede the nouns, and the fact that common and public interest appeared in the same or very similar context as common good and public good did, what is more in a number of cases they can be regarded as their equivalents. Consequently, in the papers the same goals (peace, restoration of the ancient constitution, liberty of religion, decrease of the power of the House of Austria and Spain) were associated with them. The identical sense is well exemplified by the expressions used by the bailo about the endeavors connected to the Prince of Transylvania. Talking to the Transylvanian ambassador the bailo assured him about the “great esteem that arises from his valor and from his generous resolutions which are very profitable for the *common good*.”²⁵ Not much earlier however, he reported how he and the other residents talked to the ministers of the Porte to support Bethlen’s goal, because they were convinced that “with our offices we can assist at these ministers a cause so profitable to the *common interest*.”²⁶

If the assumption is correct, I believe that the concept of common good was the point where *interest* could be connected to the humanist vocabulary in the smoothest way as *common interest*. In these cases it referred to the general interest of everyone, which is basically the common good, the most valuable goal in the old

²⁵ *ibid*, 604. et della stima grande che fa del suo valor, et delle sue generose risolutioni molto proficue al ben commune

²⁶ *ibid*, 563. potessimi noi con i nostri ufficii coadiuvare appresso questi Ministri a cose tanto proficue all’ interesse commune.

value system. A most telling example of this merge is the way the bailo reported about a meeting between Roe and the ambassadors of the Prince of Transylvania during which they discussed the events “which they run for the good of the common interests.”²⁷ Common interest also meant something that was necessary for the achievement of the common good, for example the diversion of the Emperor’s forces was conceived as common interest, because it was likely to result in the defeat of the House of Austria, creating a situation in which the common good could be (re)established. The bailo gave account of Roe’s asking him “what way ... through which it was possible to divert the Emperor’s army from the Palatinate and from Retia seemed to me useful to the common interest and benefit.”²⁸

Out of the residents the Venetian ones used the phrase *common interest* and replaced *good* with *interest* the most frequently. In the traditional humanist language services were done for the common good, but Zorzi related how the Transylvanian ambassador “told about the success of the said factions with much advantage and service to the common interests.”²⁹ On another occasion he described how the English and the Dutch residents, having discovered the way the Emperor attempted to deceive the Porte, in their negotiations with the Caimacam wished “to make use of it to the advantage of the common interests.”³⁰ It is noteworthy that in these quotations, similarly to some previous ones, interest can be found in the plural. This usage implies concrete goals and this way deprives the term from its abstract quality. One explanation for this solution might be the unintentional choice of the more concrete form and meaning than the abstract. Another possibility is a slightly different sense of

²⁷ ibid, 711. massime nelli accidenti che qui corrono per il bene de’communi interessi

²⁸ ibid, 545. con tal via senza danno della Christianita da Turchi, divortor l’armi dell’Imperator dal Palatinato et dalla Retia , mi parevano utili al beneficio et interesse comune

²⁹ ibid, 689. conto del successo delle dette fattioni con molto vantaggio et servitio dei comuni interessi

³⁰ ibid, 721. disegnando valersene in avvantaggio di comuni interessi

the term common interest. In such cases common interest emerged as a collection of particular interests, where *common* had a double sense. On the one hand it designated the humanist ideal about the goal of political activity, on the other it put the emphasis on the collection of the same goals pursued by many, either members of a formal league or simply sharing the same objectives, as it appears from Roe's letter to the Prince of Transylvania: "in the union of Germany the interests and consents of many princes are involved."³¹ The bailos frequently referred to the anti-Imperialist party as "princes collegued and interested"³² as well as Césy regularly called them "the kings and princes interested."³³ The presence of this sense in the 1620s seems to contradict John Alexander Wilson Gunn's thesis which claims that the expression *public interest* became familiar by the middle of the seventeenth century in England, gradually replacing the term *common good*,³⁴ and it was during the preceding years of the Revolution when *public interest* gained its sense as the collection of individual interests.³⁵

Due to the complexity of this perception of common interest, particular interests were represented in it to a greater or lesser degree, in accordance with the relevance of the actual component of common interest to them. This characteristic is well illustrated by the arguments about the extent of the financial involvement of each ally in the war. Charles I for example intended to decrease the costs related to the war against the Emperor and would have welcomed other states take over some of the burdens. Nonetheless, he was afraid that if the King of Denmark was not absolutely devoted to the common cause, his proposition might dishearten him. Therefore he

³¹ Roe, *Negotiations*, 396.

³² Óváry, 556. Principi collegati et interessati

³³ BnF F 1650, 636r. les Roys et princes intheresses

³⁴ Gunn, J. A. W. *Politics and the Public Interest in the Seventeenth Century* Studies in Political History (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1969), Introduction ix..

³⁵ *ibid*, 3.

instructed Buckingham in his negotiations with the King of Denmark in the following way:

“you may take occasion to shew the *common interest* and how requisite it wilbee, for every particular prince and commonweale to cast of all partiality and artifices, for the avoyding of necessary charge from themselves and casting great burthens vpon others; but as it is for *publique safety*, so with common counsell, forces and purses to conjoyne in assistance for defensive and offensive action; the quotas of every severall prince and member of that state would be so equally layd, and, (*according to their interest*) so rayzed as we (who are to doe other great works by diversion) may not be in any degree so charged as with the maintenance of 6000 foot, and 1000 horse, with artillery accordingly or with 30000 l. a monthe. And so yow are to insist upon a large moderation of the monthly charge...But before all yow must be sure that our deare uncle be throughlie affected, and well engaged, before yow press too earnestly the withdrawing of our payments; least our deare vncle, forseeing our reason and necessities, and not being confirmed in the will and power of the German princes may thinke of his owne disengagement and, by complying with the emperour, make his owne surety and advantage.”³⁶

Roe agreed with the just distribution of costs according to interests, and for this reason he called the attention of the secretary of state that England should assume at least the same amount of financial contribution as France did to support Bethlen’s attack on the Emperor: “this diuersion of Gabor doth not so directly serue the affaires of Italy, as those of Germany; therefore, if the French king so willingly embrace it, it much more concerneth his majestie whose interests haue more respect vpon Germany then Italy.”³⁷ Although Roe was correct in saying that the money to be given to Bethlen is ridiculously low compared to the other war related expenses of England, the decision makers in London were resolved to involve the Republic of Venice in sharing the costs. Venice verbally heavily expressed her support, but never contributed financially to maintaining Bethlen.³⁸ Roe called the attention of the secretary of state, too, that it was imperative for Venice to perform what is requested from her in this respect: “his majestie may be pleased to presse St. Marke to open his

³⁶ Roe, *Negotiations*, 463-464.

³⁷ *ibid*, 511.

³⁸ *ibid*, 746-747.

purse, *whose interests are nearer*, and their fears more pressive.”³⁹ For the same reason Isaac Wake regularly talked to the senate in Venice and argued:

“notwithstanding the great and infinite charge his majestie was at, both at home and abroad, yet to expresse the zeale he did beare to the good cause....he would be ready to performe what had beene desired...in case that *others, who had equal interest in the publique liberty, and did beare a lesser weight*, would contribut their parts accordingly”⁴⁰

The distribution of load according to the degree of interest appeared in the French ambassador’s reports, too. When he related how diligently and successfully he conducted himself at the Porte to achieve the suspension of the peace treaties between the Emperor and the Turks he emphasized the noble character of his activity by comparing the proportion of involvement with the various degrees of actual interest: “the *other ambassadors more interested in these affairs than me* who conducted myself in a way that neither these nor those could complain.”⁴¹

The perception of common interest as a collection of, from some aspect identical, particular interests not only resulted in the desire for the just distribution of burdens, but also evoked a strategy for urging a partner to active engagement. With the acknowledgement of the common character of particular interests pointing in the same direction, common interest and particular interests were combined and they reinforced each other. Rather than hiding the interest of a given state and pretending the sole presence of the common one, a regard to the self also became acknowledged as a just end within certain boundaries. Isaac Wake shares his opinion about the diversion of Bethlen by underlining both kinds of interests: “if he do resolute to

³⁹ *ibid*, 453.

⁴⁰ *ibid*, 577.

⁴¹ BnF F 1650, 630r. les aultres Ambrs plus interessés en cette affayre que moy quy me conduyray en sorte que les vns ny les aultres ne senpuyssant plaindre, et Toutes foyz que Vre Mte soit servie selon les intherests de sa couronne et de son service

continue constant, questionlesse he will do much good for himselfe and the publique.”⁴² Roe writes in a similar manner to the prince himself:

“therefore whatsoever your highness shall doe apart (though in such affaires *wherein there is common interest*, particular treaties are not the right way to a good conclusion) I shallbee most gladd and stand by and enjoy the fruicts and to heare that all *things are done to your highness content and the public utility*.”⁴³

The examples could be listed endlessly: “I will leaue nothing, that *concerns the publique and your highness seruice*, unperfect,”⁴⁴ “to use your armes *for your owne and the common benefit*,”⁴⁵ “stand vp in defence of their owne and the publique safetie,”⁴⁶ “I told him I could not chuse but wonder to see that his master did so much neglect *both the publique casue and his owne priuate ineterst*.”⁴⁷ Césy diligently informed his king about the parallel marriage negotiations of Bethlen with the Emperor and with the elector of Brandenburg “in order to have the consultations about it that are necessary *for his interest and for those of his friends and allies* who request very much the diversion of the arms of the house of Austria.”⁴⁸ The bailo bribed two Turkish officials “thinking profitable *for the common and Your Serenity’s own interests*.”⁴⁹ He frequently applied the word *service* with the sense to do something in the interest of someone. For example he commented on Bethlen’s aim to take up arms again, saying: “the good result of his negotiations at this Porte mentioned, for the

⁴² Roe, *Negotiations*, 474.

⁴³ *ibid*, 516.

⁴⁴ *ibid*, 536.

⁴⁵ *ibid*, 540.

⁴⁶ *ibid*, 587.

⁴⁷ *ibid*, 694.

⁴⁸ BnF F 1650, 334v. pour y prendre les councils necessayre pour ces intherests et pour ceulx de ces amys et allies quy reguerreroent bien la diuersion des armes de la mayson D’Austriche

⁴⁹ Óváry, 607. io conoscendo proficui agl’interessi comuni et propri della Serenita Vostra

cause of the diversion from Friuli of the Cesarean army, is *not only the common, but also of the particular service of Your Serenity*.”⁵⁰

Given that particular and public interests appeared interwoven to such a considerable degree, a wrong step could have harmful results for both the interest of a state and the common one. As Wake expressed his worries about the Venetian standpoint: “if they [Venetians] did refuse now to concur with his majestie and his friends, their backwardness would be interpreted a desertion of the cause, and perhaps produce dangerous effects, both to the publicque, and to their state particular, which is surrounded with a potent enemy.”⁵¹ In the argumentation the threat to the interest of Venice is specified and thus receives a greater emphasis than the overall threat to the public cause. The fact that the addressee of the letter was not a Venetian official but an English ambassador shows that the reasoning based on the observations about the particular interest of another state appeared more impressive – and convincing – in general. Further, the overlap of the two fields provided a possibility to put the emphasis on the side of the interest of the state, whenever it came to the persuasion of the addressee. At these instances the argument appears as the expression of attentiveness originating in affection and, consequently, in friendship. Césy found it important to assure his king that “I will make the Republic see with what affection I embrace their interests because of the command of Your Majesty.”⁵² The French, the English and the Venetian resident together went to the Porte with the purpose to urge the officials to take some measures, with reference to the interest of the Ottoman Empire. They told “him [the grand vizier] and the principal officials of the sultan to

⁵⁰ ibid, 562-563. puo la buona riuscita delle dette sue negociationi a questa Porta, per le cause altre volte scritte della diversione delle armi Cesaree dal Friuli, esser non solo di commune, ma di particular servizio di vostra Serenita.

⁵¹ Roe, *Negotiations*, 634.

⁵² BnF F 1650, 23r. feray ie voir a la Republique avec quelle affection iembrasse leurs interests par le commandement de vré Magesté

what extent this election is important to the interest of His Highness touching upon the obtainment of the necessary commands to the Prince of Transylvania to make him oppose this plan with as much force of his own as of the Ottomans.”⁵³

While Charles I worried about the possibility that the King of Denmark lean towards his safety and advantage instead of the common good, as we read it above, Roe verbalized his concern about Bethlen’s safety in a letter sent to him pointing to the unreliability of a peace between Bethlen and the Emperor in February 1625 which arises from the incompatibility of the prince’s past actions and a secure, friendly relationship:

“these heriocrine actions so nobly vndertaken, so well aduanced, by so powerfull meanes in so iust a cause wee cannot thinke your highness will now retyre from that glory which you professed these last yeares alone, and with so happy successe; at leastwise not so far to alter, as to goe ouer and adhere to the other party, to strengthen and assist them whom singlye you haue so daunted; of whose friendship and religion your highnes can neuer bee secure”⁵⁴

In the same letter he openly claimed that all the advice the prince so far had received originated in the good will of the allied states towards the well-being of the prince, which happened to coincide with that of all Christendom:

“Our end and scope in these aduises were to free your highnes from the necessity of falling into the emperors power or discretion, with whom wee conceiued your highness could neuer make any secure peace: and that seeing the occasions were faire, by the changes of counsell in other parts, your highnes might haue opportunity to renew your antient leagues or to make newe with other princes vpon whom you might safely rely, and *whose affaires and ends might haue one generall concurrence with those of your highnes*; the vniversall liberty and peace of Christendome.”⁵⁵

In line with the rhetoric, Bethlen also claimed that he was acting only for the interest of the princes united:

⁵³ ibid, 437r. a faire congnoitre au caymacam et aux principaux ministres du grand sg combien cest eleccion importe a l’interest de sa Hauteesse tucherons dobtenir des commandemants nesessaire au prince de transilvanye pour le faire opposer a ce desin tant avec ces propre force qu’avec celle de l’ottoman

⁵⁴ Roe, *Negotiations*, 352.

⁵⁵ ibid, 351.

“declaring that hee is at peace and safe; hath no neede for his owne affaires, to trouble himselfe or endanger his territories or to seeke to them; and therefore, if hee shall runne the perill of drawing vpon him many enemyes, *only for the quarrell of others*, that it is just and reason hee should haue such contribution and other caution for his retraict, as becomes a wise prince to ground his actions vpon”.⁵⁶

It is noteworthy that the prince did not term the goal of his war as the common interest, but he called it the quarrel of others. This way he distanced his activity from the common good, to which, according to the ethical code, he should have inclined by himself, and placed his action in the realm of doing service to others, for their benefit. The two examples of pretending to look only at the other party’s interest out of good will well display the “rhetorical duel” to be discussed below. The efforts made to diminish the concern with one’s own interest on the surface and to assert that the other party’s interest was in the focus of the activity of a prince proves that although interest as an aspect was generally accepted, own interest alone was not referred to as a justification for actions, only, as it has been described above, as a part of the common interest. This phenomenon testifies that the value system did not allow for grounding a prince’s rhetoric on a self-centered approach, but still required it to fit the framework of friendship and the accepted objects of zeal.

Let us stop here for a second and devote some thoughts to the question how to interpret self-interest in the case of a prince. In the traditional dichotomy self-interest was opposed to the common good of the political community. However, on the interstate level a “supra” common good was introduced, as it was shown in the previous chapter. Several questions thus arise. How do the two kinds of common good relate to each other? Can the more comprehensive one be regarded as superior to the “simple” common good of a state, and can it be claimed that, following the original scheme, each state is the equivalent of an individual, consequently the interest of each

⁵⁶ *ibid*, 423.

state is inferior to the common good of the community of states? If yes, how should the actions of a prince be judged if he cares more for the actual common good of his state rather than the universal one? The case is further complicated by the duality of the public and private quality of the prince himself. His actions supposedly are to be driven by his concern for the common good of his state and the community of states; still, they might be intertwined with purely personal goals. These latter, unless they contradict any type of the common good, do not result in considering the prince a tyrant, but they do rank his actions connected to his personal goals less praiseworthy, as we shall see in the case of Gábor Bethlen.

These questions do not seem to have been addressed directly in the sources, and it is doubtful whether they emerged at all in the minds of contemporaries. The above examples display a seemingly equal importance attributed to the public interest and the interest of a state. There are no traces that the interest of a state was ranked inferior to that of the common interest, what is more, this dichotomy did not even occur directly in connection with *interest*. In an ideal case, and this is what the argumentations aim to suggest, the two interests overlapped. But, as the papers show, the existential needs of a state excused it from acting in line with the common good/common interest.

Safety and Necessity

Unlike *interest* the term *necessity* was not introduced by new humanism. The centuries old saying that Publilius Syrus pronounced at the time of the collapse of the Roman Empire: *necessitas non habet legem*⁵⁷ was referred to from time to time throughout the centuries. It expressed the principle that necessity overrules all other

⁵⁷ Skinner, *Foundations of Modern Political Thought I*, 254.

concerns, and was frequently alluded to in the first half of the sixteenth century. Records of semi-official Florentine boards from 1512 show how the argumentations building on the Ciceronian language about honesty and justice being worth more than utility, at the end conclude with reference to *necessity* which has no law and thus may compel the decisionmakers to depart from justice.⁵⁸ The French rhetoric also claimed that it was a necessity for Francis I to look for the Ottoman alliance in order to find protection against the aggression of the Emperor.⁵⁹ However, the term does not appear once in Sadler's papers, while it forms a regular component of the English discourse in 1620s. The livelier use of *necessity* seems to be connected to the emergence of the new humanist language of politics, which drew it in the orbit of interest. Ideas were put forward according to which the safety of the state was the supreme law and necessity meant an extreme situation in which the preservation of the self and it overrode all other concerns.⁶⁰

Arguments that justified actions with references to *safety*, *security* and *necessity* implied the existential preservation of a state as the most fundamental value. The quotations below will show that *safety* was used in the sense of physical integrity in case of individuals and this sense was applied on the state level as well. The safety of the prince and the safety of the state were not distinguished, as it could be seen above in the instructions given to Buckingham touching upon the threat that the king of Denmark may "make his own surety." In November 1624 Roe reported on the news he had received from Poland about the controversies and factions of the nobility there. He added how the Prince of Transylvania

⁵⁸ Viroli, Maurizio. *From Politics to Reason of State : The Acquisition and Transformation of the Language of Politics, 1250-1600* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 134.

⁵⁹ Poumarède, *Justifier l'injustifiable: l'alliance turque au miroir de la chrétienté*, 230-233.

⁶⁰ Tuck, *Philosophy and Government*, 92.

“beeing well enformed of all these distempers and diuisions, hath not sate ydle, nor neglected to practice somewhat for himselfe; and taking the opportunity, hath wrought upon another faction contrary to all these, which are the protestants...butt the papists beeing much the stronger, and no possibility without their fauour to attayne his ends, hee hath not omitted to attempt them with some insinuations of conformity, butt especially by ioyning himselfe in that common rule, of opposing and excluding all the kindred and frends of the emperour. To this hee added...that which doth moue very much; that hee will giue absolute peace and security to the kingdome of Poland, from the Turks and Tartars, who force them to keepe continuall armyes in the border; and yett once or twice a yeare their cuntry is broken into, spoiled, burnt, and infinite numbers of poore people carried away...the frontiere dispeopled and no hope of quiett. *This argument of every mans particular safety and the great mens ease and proffit, comes neare them, and is very weighty.*”⁶¹

From time to time he reported about the lengthy war between the Ottoman Empire and Persia, which had a significant influence on the politics of the Porte towards the European states as well as its domestic peace. In February 1625 he wrote the following to the secretary of state:

“The state of this empire still languisheth. The vizier continues the siege of Babilon, with no great hopes, at least as wee conceiue by the silence; the king of Persia beeing encamped neare him, to attend occasion. Vpon the success of this action depends *the whole quiett, if not the safety of this state.*”⁶²

In this quotation *quiet* referred to the internal peace of the Empire and *safety*, something even more important as it appears from the sentence, to its soundness. The focus on the safety of a state defined what measures were necessary to take for its preservation, that is, its maintenance and the avoidance of damages. These emerge as necessities for the state, tools that serve its protection to assure its mere existence and integrity. Necessity as a concept was applied on an individual level and also at interstate level. As for the former, in Roe’s interpretation it was necessity that kept Mortesa, the bassa of Buda active showing his significance so he could avoid being sent to the Persian war, which would have meant his end in his view.⁶³ As for the latter, before Bethlen’s second attack on the Emperor it became clear that the promised financial support from the anti-Imperialist states could not be delivered in

⁶¹ Roe, *Negotiations*, 313-314.

⁶² *ibid*, 486.

⁶³ *ibid*, 590.

time, Roe was convincing the prince that they would surely be paid out of necessity: “though ther may be some difficulty in the beginning to discouer or force a fitt channell....yet *the necessitye of the publicque utility* will ouercome all, and you may proceed securely vpon the assurance of the faith of princes.”⁶⁴ Public utility seems to refer either to public good itself or to the tools that can lead to the public good. For this reason if something necessary is missing, public utility cannot be at work so public good neither can be (re)established, in other words its existence is in danger.

Necessity was frequently referred to in the papers and through it the compulsive force of the circumstances that urged a ruler to act in line with it was acknowledged. Necessity as an explanation and justification for actions could not be refused, it was regarded just and acceptable and it completely excused the actor, even if he was the King of England. The Venetian resident in London informed the Signoria in September 1626 that whenever the question of the financial support to Bethlen’s diversion arises “the King always excuses himself with his necessity which really could not be greater.”⁶⁵

Roe followed this principle when, together with Bethlen’s ambassador, in July 1626 he visited the new Caimacam, who succeeded Georgi Mehmet, Bethlen’s principal patron and “adopted father”⁶⁶ following his death, in order to achieve his support for Bethlen’s moves and to dispel his fear concerning the interruption of the peace with the Emperor:

“I found him utterly ignorant of all affayres of state, and consequently fearfull; but from perswasions, I ascended to protestations, vrging the necessity, wher he could not apprehend

⁶⁴ ibid, 590.

⁶⁵ Óváry, 797. sempre il Re si escusa con le sue necessita che veramente non possono esser maggiori

⁶⁶ Roe, *Negotiations*, 531.

the utility; and concluding, that Gabor must go forward for his owne safety and the publicque good, without his assistance, wher he might now take vpon himselfe the honor.”⁶⁷

In his argumentation Roe applied the strongest and clearest justification: the prince must continue (it is a necessity) his preparation for war and then attack the Emperor for the safety of his state (note that it is termed *his* safety). The ambassador could have referred to utility, as he informed Elizabeth, but the Caimacam did not share his view about why this action would result in an advantage for the Ottoman Empire, given the fact that he was a member of the Imperial faction at the Porte.⁶⁸ However, the Caimacam could not oppose Roe’s argumentation about Bethlen’s necessity and seemed to incline to accept all the ambassadors’ requests.

In Roe’s opinion if there was something that had to stressed in the negotiations at the Porte, it was the *necessity* of the Ottoman Empire, a conviction derived from his observation that the officials at the Porte “will trust no christian arguments.”⁶⁹ He did not use this strategy only with regard to the Turks. The bailo described the Transylvanian ambassador’s visit to the residents mentioning how Roe reasoned with him. The Transylvanian explained that his master had not turned his back on the league

“but he was lead to make peace with the Emperor ...and concluded that he was ready to perform his part if and when the opportunity and the mode to do it present themselves. The English replied that not only would it be the opportunity, but also *the necessity*, considering the power of the house of Austria, and how from this he had to expect his last fall, when conveniently it could have been forseen.”⁷⁰

This is what Roe took into consideration when, following Bethlen’s peace with the Emperor in May 1624, he embarked on the difficult task to withdraw Bethlen from

⁶⁷ ibid, 531.

⁶⁸ ibid, 530.

⁶⁹ ibid, 589.

⁷⁰ Óváry, 735. ma che si era condotto ad accordar la pace con l’imperator...et concluse ch’ era pronto ad eseguir la parte sua, quando le fosse mostrata l’opportunita et il modo. Le rispose l’Inglese che non solo vi era l’opportunita, ma la necessita, considerandole la potenza dalla Casa d’Austria, et come da quella doveva aspettar l’ultima sua rovina, quando opportunamente non se li fosse proveduto.

the side of the Emperor and divert the Porte from the ratification of the peace with the Emperor. He was convinced that Bethlen was dissembling to both sides; still, as he was sure about the prince being the sole means to divert the Emperor's forces, he intended to secure him for that goal. For this reason Roe visited the Grand Vizier and warned him that the Porte might lose Bethlen to the Emperor if they are not more cautious, given the fact that he had made a separate peace with Ferdinand. He paid attention to preserving the prince in the goodwill of the Porte so he kept his own opinion about Bethlen's maneuvers from the vizier. "I haue been carefull with his creditt here, *imputing his actions to necessity*"⁷¹ – wrote Roe in his letter to the secretary of state. The ambassador of Bethlen, trying to urge Roe to foster the acceptance of the prince among the Protestant princes, also argued, or rather threatened, that unless the princes "runne one fortune with him...*he must giue way to necessitye*."⁷²

Reference to necessity as an argument was also applied by Bethlen's argumentation through which he intended to justify his sudden peace with the Emperor following his 1626 attack. In the bailo's report we read about the letter sent by the prince to the ambassadors at the Porte. He summarized its content in the following way: "it is an apology in his defense, placing all the blame for all the wrong to the delays and irresolution of others, showing that *he was lead to what he had done by necessity*."⁷³ This was an explanation that the bailo himself had already verbalized, even before receiving the letter of the prince, reasoning that no money arrived

⁷¹ Roe, *Negotiations*, 304.

⁷² *ibid*, 239.

⁷³ Óváry, 718. "e una apologia in sua difesa, addossando la colpa di tutto il male alle dilazioni et irresolutioni altrui, dimostrando essersi condotto a cio che ha fatto per necessita"

“without which he not being able to sustain the war, *it was necessary to change his heart* to the settlement which came with a great request proposed by the Emperor.”⁷⁴

Interestingly, the reference to necessity was exactly what the English resident had aimed to prevent a year earlier. In his letter to the Prince in February 1625 he described the residents’ negotiations at the Porte to improve the conditions for his future rupture with the Emperor. He claimed “our end and scope in these aduises were *to free your highnes from the necessity* of falling into the emperors power or discretion.”⁷⁵ True, it was a different necessity than the one Bethlen used to justify his peace with. In the first case Bethlen’s necessity meant his weakness without the support of his allies, which did not allow him to wage war against the Emperor with success. In the second case necessity would have derived from the Porte’s command forbidding Bethlen to wage war against the Emperor, which the residents successfully prevented.

Besides the function of necessity as a justification for actions that contradict all other concerns, it was regarded as the most fundamental cause that certainly moved states and princes if they perceived that their safety was threatened. Roe informed the secretary of state about the news he had received from Venice that described “how cautelously the senate fences and will doe nothing till their owne necessity enforceth them, which is always a course of disaduantage: they take no care of oltramontani.”⁷⁶ At one stage he also thought “necessity enforceth Bethlen to raise help.”⁷⁷ The most telling description about the fundamental character of necessity for states emerges in Roe’s letter sent to Wake in May 1628. By that time he had become disillusioned and

⁷⁴ *ibid*, 690. senza il quale non potendo egli sostenere la guerra, sarà necessitato a volger l’animo all’accordo che da Cesare gli viene con grande istanza proposto

⁷⁵ Roe, *Negotiations*, 351.

⁷⁶ *ibid*, 646.

⁷⁷ *ibid*, 817.

weary of the unsuccessful trials for a common attack against the Emperor, still he was willing to actively continue the work and foster the possibility of a new attack, with other means than before. He realized that necessity is not only the strongest argument but also the biggest force that could move the actions: “necessitye is like to force that, which neyther monye, oratorie, nor friendship hath beene or could be able to doe: and now the use of us here wilbe only to prouoke their owne occasions [for attack], to encrease their jelousies.”⁷⁸

Particular interests, private ends

As it has been outlined above, as long as the interest of a prince or state coincided with the professed common interest it could not only be openly acknowledged, but also applied to support argumentation. Notwithstanding, if the two pointed in different directions, they appeared as the public interest opposing the private interest of the ruler of a state. According to the ethical code of the period the former was unquestionably superior and in an ideal case it was supposed to take the lead. James I, out of his devotion to the overall state of Christendom, oppressed his fatherly love towards his daughter, Elizabeth, wife of the Palatine and resolved to apply only peaceful means to find a solution to the restoration of the Palatinate without any success. Still, he did not start a war, because, as Roe describes, “his majesties publique interest in the peace of Christiandome was more deare to him than any priuat respect”.⁷⁹ James’s conduct fulfilled the expectations.

The claimed superiority of the public interest to the private one was generally present. It even made the “sad, but necessary” event of the enslavement of Christian captives by the Turks acceptable. Following an attack on the Emperor’s forces three

⁷⁸ ibid, 814.
⁷⁹ ibid, 82.

hundred Christian captives were sent to the grand signor as presents which Roe commented, after expressing his deep grief about it, as an example of the subordination of private interest to public through citing, not fully correctly, “habet aliquid ex iniquo omne magnum exemplum quod contra singulos utilitate publica rependitur.”⁸⁰ Problems arising from the clash of the two types of interest emerged in the commercial sphere as well. Wake complained about the English merchants’ machinations, which caused great damage to the English trade as a whole: “merchants and masters of ships, corrupted with their owne priuate interests, haue yielded and donne many things which haue prejudiced our nation in generall.”⁸¹

As it was discussed above, the expression of motivations deriving from self-interest were regarded of less moral and practical value than motivations of affection or wisdom, still, the interest of a state appeared as an accepted justification for an act. What is more, it was not the lowest in the hierarchy but ranked above another motivation: *ambition*. Ambition as the sole motivation behind an act that might result in harm for others was unacceptable. The anti-Imperialist party frequently applied the term in connection with the deeds of its opponents. The bailo related the words of Bethlen’s ambassador against “the immense ambition of the House of Austria,”⁸² which lay behind its unjust activities. From Roe’s letter to the secretary of state his total condemnation of the duke of Bavaria, who had attacked Frederick, emerges: “when I consider the justice of God, who is most guilty; he that *had no interests but*

⁸⁰ ibid, 579. the quotation is from the Annals, bk14.ch44, the correct text is „Omne magnum exemplum habet aliquid ex iniquo, quod contra singulos utilitate publica rependitur”, which means “There is some injustice in every great precedent, which, though injurious to individuals, has its compensation in the public advantage” – translation and original found on “Who was Who in Roman Times,”

www.romansonline.com (accessed January 11 2011)

⁸¹ ibid, 685.

⁸² Óváry, 632. smisurata ambitione della Casa d’ Austria

ambition, and ambition against his owne bloud.”⁸³ It was still the “*ambition* of uniuersall monarchye in the house of Austria”⁸⁴ that Bethlen’s ambassador presented two years later as the main cause for his new preparations for war. The French, Venetian and English residents composed a declaration against the Spanish designs and presented it at the Porte. In this document they warned the Turkish officials that “the Spaniards are an arrogant nation filled with artifices and naturally having bad feelings towards this empire and in Christendom are hated as *ambitious* of others’ states and goods.”⁸⁵ The same view of the Spanish kings as ambitious of others’ dominion already popped up in the French rhetoric in the early sixteenth century when the Ottoman relationship was justified as a necessity, referring to the Spanish ambitions for hegemony.⁸⁶ Going back further in time the republicans in Florence in the first half of the fifteenth century also blamed the *ambiziosi* who were aiming at tyranny.⁸⁷ The term *ambition* was as old as the rest of the old humanist vocabulary. In Aquinas’ definition it signifies an inordinate desire for honor, when one looks for more honor than what is due.⁸⁸ Sadler uses it in the very same manner as the early seventeenth century diplomats. Writing about the King of Spain, he describes the great things God had bestowed on him, meaning the immense amount of gold and his vast empire, and how he abused the favor of God. Instead using them for God’s glory he made them “instruments of his unlimited ambition, to the overthrowe and destruction of his neighbours, and the maintenance of factious warres in everie corner of Christendome.”⁸⁹ Botero also regards ambition as a negative feature in a prince that

⁸³ *ibid*, 124.

⁸⁴ *ibid*, 810.

⁸⁵ BnF F 1650, 454v. li spagnoli una natione altiera [arrogant] e piena di artificii e naturalmente mal affetti a questo imperio e in Christianita odiasti come ambiziosi delli stati e beni di altri

⁸⁶ Poumarède, *Justifier l’injustifiable: l’alliance turque au miroir de la chrétienté*, 230.

⁸⁷ Viroli, *From Politics to Reason of State*, 210.

⁸⁸ Houser, R. E “The Virtue of Courage in Part II”, in Pope, Stephen J. ed., *The Ethics of Aquinas* (Georgetown University Press: Washington 2002), 304-320, 312.

⁸⁹ Sadler, *The State Papers and Letters of Sir Ralph Sadler* Vol. 2, 287.

might end up in the collapse of his dominion.⁹⁰ Lipsius finds the gentle trespassing of laws in necessity, for self-preservation, permissible, but never with the target of enlarging estates,⁹¹ which would be the case of ambition.

The opposition between interest and ambition in the last quotation of the English resident highlights what made interest acceptable and ambition unacceptable according to the prevailing value system. Reference to interest was used to signal an intention to avoid possible or certain disadvantages affecting one's own (or one's friends') already existing status either resulting from the lack or performance of certain actions. Ambition, on the contrary, targeted at goals which, achieved or not, did not affect the initial state of affairs negatively, which meant it was not about avoiding something harmful but only about ameliorating one's position from some respect at the expense of others. In the papers it referred to the effort to obtain something unjustly, such as territories (house of Austria) or a title (duke of Bavaria). Thus an act performed out of ambition was never necessary and indispensable for the actor and this way no offense it caused could be justified. Self-interest as a motivation deriving from necessity and with a view on safety was tolerated in the theories and also in practical usage. Due to their regarding the old language as mostly to be used for formalities described in the previous chapter interest appears as the most common and self-evident motivation behind actions. The Venetian and the French papers do not comment on such occasions negatively. However, in the English papers it always had a negative overtone when it was contrasted to the common good. Most of these cases were centered around the figure of the Prince of Transylvania, Gábor Bethlen.

⁹⁰ Botero, *Reason of State*, 5.

⁹¹ Tuck, *Philosophy and Government*, 57.

The Case of Gábor Bethlen

In the eyes of the residents during the 1620s the Prince of Transylvania gradually became the embodiment of the prince driven exclusively by self-interest. The prince's application of the rhetoric of affection towards the common good, religion and the princes and kings allied was soon outweighed by his unexpected steps and clear double play. The bailo talked about the general view of the prince when he related the activity of Bethlen's agent at the Porte in February 1623, after the prince's treaty with the Emperor:

"the above mentioned gentleman tried to justify the resolution to the treaty in the name of his prince with the English and the Dutch ambassadors, after he [Bethlen] had not once assured them through his people and letters that he will not stop holding arms if before, with the help of these [the Turks], he did not have the count Palatine restored in his state; bringing now the apology for not having kept the promise of the movements of arms to the same effect that should have been done from these parts. With all this he has told them in his [Bethlen's] name that he will not come to the conclusion of peace with the Emperor without the inclusion of the reinstatement of the count Palatine; but by now everyone knows with how many artifices the said Gabor governs himself, and to what extent *he intends only his own interests*."⁹²

Roe recorded his impressions in July 1623 writing "I always suspected him for a man indulgent only to himself."⁹³ In May 1625 he was completely convinced about the prince's self-centered character and summarized his views with an ironic twist of the Ciceronian view on the unity of honesty and utility: "he is governed by no other counsell then interest; quidquid utile, honestum".⁹⁴

What this interest consisted of precisely is difficult to define even today.

Present day historiography assigns Bethlen the intention of preserving the integrity of

⁹² Óváry, 532. il sudetto Gentiluomo procurato giustificar a nome del suo Principe coll'ambassador d'Inghilterra et di Fiandra la rissolution della detta tregua, havendo egli con sue lettere et huomini fatto piu volte assicurarli; che no cesseria dall'armi, se prima col mezzo di esse non havesse fatto rimetter nel suo stato il Palatino; portando hora per scusa non essergli state mantenute le promesse di mosse d'armi al medesimo effetto che da quelle parti gli eran state fatte. Con tutto cio ha detto loro in suo nome, che non venira a conclusione di pace con l'Imperator senza includervi le redintegratione del Palatino.; ma hormai tutti conoscono con quanti artificii si governa il predetto Gabor, et quanto sii intento ai soli suoi proprii interessi"

⁹³ Roe, *Negotiations*, 164.

⁹⁴ *ibid*, 404.

Transylvania and together with it the possibility to reunite the principality with Hungary when the occasion arises.⁹⁵ This is what he claimed in his so called Testament,⁹⁶ too. Still, the great shifts in the direction of his politics leave the present day researcher with doubts. Bethlen so carefully hid his thoughts that they are difficult to reconstruct.⁹⁷ Because of the secrecy of Bethlen's goals on the one hand, and his strategy of not closing any escape route from risky situations on the other, the diplomats dealing with him were ignorant about his possible intentions which no one could "decyphar without his owne key, kept in his bosome."⁹⁸ Bethlen's secrecy was so extensive, that his proceedings were called equally suspicious to both friends and enemies.⁹⁹ Sometimes even his ambassadors were unsure about Bethlen's short and long term goals.¹⁰⁰ No wonder his contemporaries were puzzled, and, in the lack of any chance to learn the real motivations behind his actions, it was his way of conduct that earned him the reputation of following only his own interest. The lack of constancy and the high degree of dissimulation, the utmost secrecy and the reluctance to comply with the residents' expectations all made him suspicious in their eyes, detecting a genuinely selfish attitude at the roots of his actions. Due to the fact that Bethlen did not disclose his plans and so did not express his concrete objectives explicitly, the residents saw in them only the intention to realize his personal interests.

Bethlen's pursued interest

⁹⁵ Makkai, László. "Az Ellenreformáció és a Harmicéves Háború. Az Erdélyi Fejedelmek Habsburg-ellenes Küzdelmei." (The Counter-reformation and the Thirty Years War. The anti-Habsburg fights of the Princes of Transylvania) In *Magyarország Története* (The History of Hungary) 1526-1680, edited by Pach Zsigmond Pál (Budapest: Akadémiai Kiadó, 1987), 803.

⁹⁶ Makkai, László, *Bethlen Gábor Emlékezete*. (The Memory of Gábor Bethlen) (Budapest: Európa Kiadó, 1984) 426.

⁹⁷ Roe, *Negotiations*, 644.

⁹⁸ *ibid*, 631.

⁹⁹ *ibid*, 641.

¹⁰⁰ *ibid*, 631.

Due to the lack of certainty regarding the prince's motivations views varied about his real goals. One assumption was that he desperately sought some external support for his own *safety*, and for this reason his shifts could be forgiven. He aimed to find protection under the wings of either a great empire, be it the Ottoman or the Holy Roman, or an alliance.¹⁰¹ In May 1624 the English resident described Bethlen's case to Elizabeth with references to safety and necessity which diverted him from acting in line with the common good:

"I am perswaded, a small encouragement from some christian prince would confirme him....he might bee taken into the protestant vnion of Germanye. I honor him for his excellent parts; yett I will presume so far to judge him that his motions and affections are principally directed upon his owne aduancement or safty. He is seated betweene two opposite great states and must encline to one of them, if he haue no other support ... I see upon what loathed conditions he depends, the refuges of necessitye...Seeing it is euident that in all his wayes he hath only sought out some on whom to relye, it were a good counsell to reconcile and take him home among those of his owne religion, which promiseth most fayth. Hath he not lately sought a wife in the howse of Austria? and then he would thinke himselfe safe in the alliance. That beeing refused hath he not sought to marrye the kingdome of Hungarie and so to shelter himselfe under the wings of the grand signor? But he hath found that a yoke."¹⁰²

Bethlen also used this argument when he needed to account for his instability.

According to the bailo's account his agent said that

"As for the instability he says that he has resolved to show himself in such way because of necessity and because of the faintness of others, and not because of his nature...saying that he was moved to this by the wisdom of necessity, finding himself situated between two big potentates. But as for the present he is ready to spend all including his life to advance his fortune to the universal benefit."¹⁰³

Another explanation detected the prince's *ambition* in the background of his behavior, his desire to aggrandize himself through the occupation of new territories, through a good marriage and through becoming a king either of Hungary or of Poland.

Roe at the beginning of his embassy already claimed that "his ambition hath no

¹⁰¹ ibid, 121.

¹⁰² ibid, 238-239.

¹⁰³ Óváry, 757. Quanto all'instabilita egli dice di haver conuenuto di mostrarsi tale per necessita; et per mancamento di altri, ma non gia per sua natura...dicendo essersi mosso a cio per necessita di prudenza, trovandosi ccostituito nel mezzo di due gran potentati? Ma che al presente era pronto di spenderli tutti con la vita insieme, per auanzar la sua fortuna a beneficio universale.

bounds where he hath hope to raigne per fas et nefas.”¹⁰⁴ In his letter to the Prince of Wales he proposed to make use of the ambition of the Prince:

“So that it must bee concluded, the motion must rise from Gabor; his ambition must bee fomented; and ther is but one way, that he may be honored with a solemne ambassage in the name of the princes of the vnion, and admitted into their alliance and protection. It is euident, he hath aymed at the kingdome of Hungary, by the countenance of the Turks; but seeing the tymes did not comport, and his succours, as the state itselfe, so vncerteyne, he then tryed to encrease his greatnes, vpon opinion of it, by treaty to gett a daughter of the Emperor, with her to establish himselfe and his posterity in part of Hungary and Transylvania, if he might from so high a match haue issue: and this hope did beguile him to leaue his aduantage last yeare; and now hee is forced to take what conditions he can gett, and, instead of a wife, shall haue a scorne in the end...but if hee were supported by the alliance of Germany...hee would soone bee in the field, in the generall cause, with 30000 good men. To confirme him herin, two things must bee offered him: some honorable match in Germany, where there is no want of Dutch princesses, and a promise to maynteyne him in his pretences to Hungary vntill a general peace may giue a happy end vnto all those quarrells.”¹⁰⁵

Following Bethlen’s two attacks on the Emperor (1619, 1623) the opportunity for a coordinated diversion of Ferdinand’s forces was so attractive that both the residents and their superiors were willing to accept the cooperation with the Prince of Transylvania regardless of his problematic character and unclear goals. As Carleton wrote to Roe from The Hague:

“if either you or I fayle in our iudgments of Gabor, lett us not giue ouer ayming at his ends; which, I concurre with you, are all guided by priuat interest, notwithstanding his publique pretences; but that hath great part in the publique; and I haue written into England more then once to the same effect I perceauie you haue done to make vse of that occasion.”¹⁰⁶

In this letter the prince is presented as an instrument through which the common goal could be reached most surely. For this the anti-Imperialist party needed to supply Bethlen with what he wished for in order to assure his involvement, given the fact that both necessity and his ambitions proved stronger than his concern for the common good. Most probably it was Roe’s suggestion which resulted in Bethlen’s marrying Catherine of Brandenburg almost two years later:

¹⁰⁴ Roe, *Negotiations*, 90.

¹⁰⁵ *ibid*, 287.

¹⁰⁶ *ibid*, 235.

“I cannot promise, that hee will sodainly change because his wayes are intricate...hee cannott forgett the title of Hungary and shall marry sorne and repentance for a wife. There are also many wayes to mooue him, butt the most assured were by offering him an alliance in Germany. The elector of Brandenburg hath sisters, and other princes daughters. Hee is rich in gold and hath no ambition in so earnest pursuite as an honorable match to lay the foundation of his family”¹⁰⁷

In his communication with the Queen of Bohemia and the Prince of Wales the English ambassador applied a style which served to convince them about the idea of cooperation with the Prince of Transylvania. In order to achieve it, he emphasized those motivations behind Bethlen’s actions that did not harm his reputations. For example he mentioned *necessity*, as the main determining factor.¹⁰⁸ His letter to the secretary of state is written in a different tone:

“that way he must bee tempted, to which he is most prone of himselfe. If he were sure of any support, countenance or ease, from Christendome, ...either by the war of the Palatinate undertaken and the Bauarian there busied; or that he should bee cared for and comprehended as one of that league in occasion of any composition; ther is no doubt but he would take up his title and crowne agayne, from which no man parts willingly....In such a reconciliation as this, the minds as well the actions are to be regarded... wherin out of question, the high dessignes and thoughts of that prince are but allyed, not rooted out: but he must bee sought unto some conuenient meanes and assured of more respect hereafter; or else he will rest, or take his owne opportunitye without regard of any others’ interests.”¹⁰⁹

Although hiding one’s own interest in persuading the other party about a definite decision was highly recommended, the discovery of the interests of others was regarded at least as important in interstate relations. Having identified the three main motivating factors that determined the prince’s actual interests it became clear that they can be made of some use for the common good as defined by the anti-Imperial party. Bethlen’s goals, regardless of the true motivations behind them, could be easily aligned with those of the Protestant Union. In order to procure his involvement it seemed logical to offer him means to achieve them and thus urge him to take steps actively. The language of the following quotation is astonishing and

¹⁰⁷ *ibid*, 304.

¹⁰⁸ During the course of the year he endeavored to convince the decision makers about the positive effects of a possible diversion, and he varied the styles of his letters according to the person of the addressee. He never mentions necessity in his letters to his superiors.

¹⁰⁹ Roe, *Negotiations*, 277-278.

unique compared to the rest of the letters. It is plain and outspoken, the references to formalities, flattery, not costly baits leave no doubt about the presence of a consciously realist view of foreign politics in case of a partner who has no other concern than his interest. The quotation also reveals that the attitude deriving solely from self-interest is not regarded as exceptional, but rather as characteristic of the contemporary conditions.

“It is a small descent to lend countenance, and to feed an humour with outward formalities. If he were but so farr flattered as to bee thought a man sui iuris and to bee of consequence; euven with those cheape bayts hee might bee drawne into action so that hee might also bee assured and cared for as a confederate, in the end; for hee wants not mony, nor meanes for his owne designes, and the nature of the warre that hee can make: where booty is the pay of his horse, the strength of his army. A diuision of the emperors forces is subsidy enough; but to think that a prince will hazard his owne, who hath no other councellor then his interest, for good nature or community of religion is a paradox in this politique age. There is another way, of no great prise to engage him. By an alliance in marriage with some house in Germany; for he affects nothing more than posterity, and enobling his blood.”¹¹⁰

The contrast between the elevated rhetoric of the letters written in the traditionally humanist rhetoric and the contemptuous and cold style of this one suggests that princes following only their own interests deserved a similar treatment of calculation. The excerpt also reveals a view of contemporary politics where actions deriving solely from self-interest were frequent and the humanist ideals did not have the place they deserved in decision making in general. Roe condemns the general conduct of the princes of his time, who follow exclusively their self-interest. He applies “politique” as a negative term and as the opposite of elevated goals and manners. Still, the humanist ideals were not considered idealistic or already past by him. As the texts allude to it, these ideals should have constituted and in many cases did constitute the true and just motivations behind the actions of great princes, such as the king of England.

¹¹⁰ *ibid*, 375.

As it was demonstrated above, those who conducted their affairs in a way that could be fit in the frame of ethically correct goals which could thus be easily labeled as just goals, even if they were pursuing their own interest, were not condemned by Roe and his correspondents, whereas Bethlen's case was different given the complex nature of his status. When his pursued particular goals coincided with the professed goals of the Protestant states, their existence was accepted. When the particular goals called the prince to try to achieve them in a way that opposed the plans of the Protestant policy, they were condemned and he was called self-interested.

Turning back to the components that constituted the foundations for a cooperation between Bethlen and the anti-Imperialist powers, besides his ambitions the active character of the prince was taken into consideration as it becomes clear from Roe's letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury: "hee is a prince of so much action and expectation, that, as our business in Germany stands, hee is worthy of great consideration. He will neuer bee quiet till he bee dead."¹¹¹

The contrast between the prince's goals and the other participants' professed motivations was regularly referred to. Roe draws the attention of Bethlen's ambassador to the fact that "hee must putt his owne dessignes into accompt, who aymed at newe acquests; but the other princes had no end, either of titles or conquests, but the recovery of their antient liberty and patrimony."¹¹² Still, all the residents were convinced that the endeavor to draw the prince in the orbit of the Protestant Union was successful and would soon reap fruit. The ambassadors in Constantinople moved everything to maintain the attitude of the Porte favorable to Bethlen's proceedings and this way creating ideal circumstances for the desired diversion. Nonetheless, despite

¹¹¹ *ibid*, 319.
¹¹² *ibid*, 403.

their efforts and the facts that Bethlen was accepted to the Protestant alliance and married Catherine of Brandenburg, the task of the residents did not become easier. The prince did not change his mode of conduct, but kept his Janus face showing “one towards Turkey, and another toward Christendom.”¹¹³ Following a highly promising attack on the Emperor’s forces Bethlen suddenly made a truce in October 1626, similarly to what happened following his attack in 1623.

In search of an explanation for such an unexpected turn of affairs again, Roe identified the following reasons: “my owne opinion is gouerned by my feares, and experience of that princes nature, that he hath proceeded too far, discouraged by the mutabilitie of the Turkes, uncerteyne assignation from Christendome and the rumor of the German treaty, which is too much noysed here.”¹¹⁴ However, it was the aforementioned inconstancy in the prince’s character that came to be defined in the background of his activity. “So unquiett a spiritt liues in him that hee cannot rest but in a storme”¹¹⁵ concludes Roe and his view was shared by the bailo, who talked about “his [Bethlen’s] unquiet thoughts.”¹¹⁶ If this was the case, then, obviously, the original assumption about Bethlen’s aiming at finding a safe and secure alliance under the wings of which he could rest at peace was false.

When thinking about the future, the residents left aside the previous arguments about his search for safety and, based on what they had experienced, hoped for a shift again, arising from exactly the changeable character of the prince and his personal ambitions in the near future. They looked upon him as a tool which would be a waste not to use. The bailo supported this approach. He verbalized his opinion that at the

¹¹³ *ibid*, 661.

¹¹⁴ *ibid*, 629.

¹¹⁵ *ibid*, 728.

¹¹⁶ Óváry, 614. *suoi inquieti pensieri*

Porte the residents should talk about Bethlen “like something very profitable to their and the common interests.”¹¹⁷ This was the sole reason why the English resident still believed, if not in the prince, but the benefit his involvement can yield:

“little confidence that so desperate a relapse can be recovered: yet, it is still Gabor, who hath thrice broken with the emperor, and can neuer conteyne his desires to repossess Hungarye. I confess, that this leuitye makes him seeme unworthy of any credit: but euery instrument must be used in his owne nature; and if he be assured of support and mony, he wilbe constant to his own ends.”¹¹⁸

Means to keep Bethlen on the Protestant side

In his letter to the secretary of state Roe himself listed the means he had applied in order to maintain Gábor Bethlen on their side. This list displays the tools at the disposal of a diplomat at the beginning of the seventeenth century to influence contemporary politics. He says: “I haue not spared such coyne as I haue, letters, reasons, arguments of honor, profit and necessitye, seruices, promises, threats, all I can doe.”¹¹⁹ True, he did try all of these, and nothing worked long-term. The residents frequently required his representatives to account for his acts. The ethical code of the period required the presentation of some excuse if someone did not act in line with what had been expected from him either based on his promises or the general value system. Since the range of possible excuses was limited, the scope of action was also restricted. According to this code some things were not allowed to do because no acceptable excuses could be found for them – such as, for example, the offensive involvement of the Turk in the war of Christians. Some of Roe’s discussions with Bethlen’s ambassadors resemble a rhetorical duel, when he attempts to take the prince at his given word and the ambassadors’ replies aim at proving the prince’s innocence in the formation of the state of affairs. According to the usual dramaturgy, Roe

¹¹⁷ ibid, 706.come cosa molto profittevole ai loro et ai comuni interessi

¹¹⁸ Roe, *Negotiations*, 660.

¹¹⁹ ibid, 646.

reproached the ambassador of the prince for his master's not performing what he had promised. The ambassador then answered by listing the relevant excuses, which were followed by Roe's responses, comments and questions, and then came the ambassador's turn again. The whole conversation was kept within the frame of the ethically "right" concerns, goals and excuses, each party trying to prove his master's innocence and good will. If one of them had not been well prepared, the other would have immediately gained moral advantage, which, as it seems, was considered highly troublesome. For this reason, when one party could not have offered acceptable answers to the interrogation, he rather avoided the occasion for it and pretended to be sick or in haste without enough time for the discussion, which were generally applied strategies.

A good example for the role of excuses is the fact that Roe's activity at the Ottoman court not only targeted the establishment of ideal circumstances for the much desired diversion, but also to assure Bethlen's deprivation of one of his most often used excuses in case he fails to perform what he agreed to do. After the peace treaty between Bethlen and the Emperor in 1623 Roe worked hard at the Porte to lay the foundations of a future attack on the Emperor for Bethlen and said: "if he bee once but enclyned, hee shall find such frends here, as hee shall haue no excuse vpon want of meanes to maynteyne himselfe."¹²⁰ As this quotation demonstrates, Roe not only believed that it was indispensable for the success of Bethlen's involvement to secure the support of the Turk in advance, but also thought that Bethlen would resolve to attack the Emperor if he had no good, that is acceptable, excuse for not going to war contrary to his promise, which in this case would be claiming that the Porte did not approve his plans or did not provide him with assistance. What is more, connected to

¹²⁰ *ibid*, 287.

this point, he also tried to assure that Bethlen could not refer to the lack of Turkish support at all. He tried to achieve it through playing with the status of the prince. At the Porte he argued that the prince is not *sui iuris* but a dependent on the Porte, so the sultan should not approve his peace:

“I procured a messenger to bee sent to him and orders to the bassa of Buda... a command absolute shalbe sent to him to annihilate and disavow his last treatye, as made without authoritye, not beeing *sui iuris*; and for actuall declaration therof that Gabor shall arme, and summer in Hungarye, vpon the border of the river Tissa, his confines, to attend occasion and to preuent any ayds to bee rayسد by the emperor, and to giue him tyme to seeke alliance or protection of any christian prince, that hath a will to make use of him.”¹²¹

Still, regardless of what view he suggested at the Porte, in his letter to Wake already quoted above, Roe argued that the prince should be flattered to thought of as a *sui iuris* prince. He himself definitely applied this strategy in 1627 and refused the excuse presented by the princes’ ambassadors when they blamed the Turk for Bethlen’s withdrawal from the battlefield:

“Yesterday we called the Transylvanian ministers, and acquaynted them, that the vizier had disavowed their masters separate peace...Then I pressed the league: I vrged that from the first ouerture, i demanded of Sir Paul Keretetsye, their ambassador in the presence of the count of Torne, in what qualitie his master did offer himselfe to a confederacy with absolute princes; how he valewed himselfe? If as a subiect of this port, the motion was incompatible; for he was not *sui iuris*: if as a free prince dependant only for Tribute in Transylvania; in the rest, peace and war at liberty; or as elect king of Hungarye, or free lord of some principall parts, i would propound for him, otherwise not.”¹²²

With this argumentation Roe aimed at minimalizing the chance for Bethlen to withdraw from fighting on the excuse of the Porte’s non-consent. The bailo related what he had heard from the English resident about the discussion. He wrote that “this ambassador [Roe] having doubts that these here appear as not proceeding with

¹²¹ *ibid*, 336.
¹²² *ibid*, 653.

sincerity, but in order to find pretext and way to make honest the omission of their master and to place the guilt on others, in order to proceed as justified.”¹²³

The question arises: did Roe and his peers really believe in such a force of presence or absence of acceptable excuses for the justification of actions, that it could override primary intentions and plans? As it seems from the sources, they did. And, as it appears, everyone was aware of the significance of giving an acceptable excuse, which shows the general underlying will to comply with the ethical requirements of the period. Otherwise reputation and honor would have suffered from it. The fear of shame and blame emerges behind the curtains, serving as force of restraint from acting contrary to the ethical code in general. This is in line with Gentili’s theory relating to starting and winning an unjust war:

“you may console yourself by saying with the theologians and the philosophers that there is no sin without retribution, since every wicked deed is its own punishment...Fear, too, is a chastisement...besides there is ill repute in the eyes of others and remorse in one’s own heart, as the philosophers have made clear.”¹²⁴

Honor, reputation and shame

The importance attributed to reputation in the period is difficult to comprehend by modern standards. It was to be cherished before anything else on the one hand, but a great deal of effort was invested in how to live up to it without actually being worthy of it. Even Machiavelli in the outspoken *Prince* emphasizes the extreme importance of reputation, although he acknowledges that appearance is enough.¹²⁵ Botero devotes special attention to it and its preservation in *The Reason of State*¹²⁶ and other authors

¹²³ Óváry, 710-711. dubitando esso Signor Ambasciatore che questi fossero qui comparsi non per proceder con sincerita, ma per trovar pretesto et modo di cohonestar il mancamento del loro Signore et adossar la colpa ad altri, a fine di proceder giustificatamente

¹²⁴ Gentili, *De iure belli libri tres*, 33.

¹²⁵ Machiavelli, Niccolo. *The Prince*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 56.

¹²⁶ Botero, *Reason of State*, 54.

also extensively discuss it.¹²⁷ Richelieu in his *Testament Politique* emphasizes the necessity of good reputation for a king so that he be esteemed highly by the world, and describes what measures should be taken.¹²⁸

The letters also express the outstanding role attributed to honor and reputation. They were to be guarded and nourished, both in the case of princes and ordinary people. Roe used arguments of honor in the above quotation in order to secure that the prince keeps his word and promises. Beside the arguments of honor the threat of dishonor was also supposed to have a positive influence on the attitude of an actor. What is more, some of the dishonor of the master might have also fallen on the subject. Roe approached Captain Quadt, Bethlen's messenger, who represented the prince at The Hague and at the English court, too. Most probably he intended to press him to influence his master not to make peace with the emperor. The pressure he put on him was the danger of a possible damage to his honor: "though yow may excuse your selfe vpon your master, yet some stayne will reflect euen vpon innocent, when vnfortunate, ministers; and I know your profession as a soldier, aboue all things, doth respect your honor."¹²⁹

Honor was conceived as one of the most precious treasure of a man, which needed to be cherished, and never sacrificed for the sake of one's own interest. In the case of princes it had an even greater value. It is most probably here that the special significance of the presence or absence of acceptable excuses originated. As long as they were provided, honor was not damaged. If no such excuses could be given for an act that was considered morally wrong, honor became corrupted. Dishonorable acts resulted in the disapproval of the public and generated shame. In this case the

¹²⁷ Malcolm, *Reason of State, Propaganda and the Thirty Years' War*, 104.

¹²⁸ Richelieu, *Testament Politique*, 77-78.

¹²⁹ Roe, *Negotiations*, 659.

dishonorable act on Bethlen's part was the failure to perform his promises and his making a truce with the emperor. With this act, and the most probable treaty that was approaching, Bethlen broke his word and, equally important, betrayed the common good. Roe desperately wanted to save what could be saved and decided to press the prince to include the case of the Palatinate in his peace negotiations, as it is pronounced in his letter to Carleton at the Hague:

"Now you see what hee hath done and I know hee will send you fair apologies.; butt lett mee assure your friendship hee made a truce when hee had the imperial army in his power...lett him there stand resolute to maynteyne and dignify his taking armes for the cause of religion and our friends; lett him then demaund the Palatinate and make no finall peace without some good effects, and I will not only recant, but build him a statue, at least in myne owne heart...There is yett 6 moneths of the truce; the treaty not begunne: there is yett tyme enough, and if I had order, I would putt him to a fyery tryall, should make his cheekes burn; but howsoeuer hee may find excuses in some things, hee shall haue none, that hee was not putt in mynd how much it concerned his honor to justify his professions".¹³⁰

References to honor and threats of dishonor and shame together constituted an important part of the verbal strategy. The bailo reported the content of Bethlen's letter to Haga, the Dutch resident, in which the prince was trying to maintain his reputation by not only his clear acts in line with what was expected from him, but also voicing his intention to achieve that his friends preserve their good opinion of him: "We will perform every work, whatever is possible... so that afterwards, with so many honorable acts we can continue ahead with dignity and we can correspond to the opinion conceived of us by the so Magnificent States General, as well as by all our friends."¹³¹

Roe's account to the secretary of state shows that the open expression of disapprobation based on the commonly professed moral ground was applied as a tool to discourage the performance of a condemnable deed:

¹³⁰ ibid, 221.

¹³¹ Óváry, 558. faremo ogni opera, acchiocche possino...che poi, con tanti honorati fatti, possiamo seguitar inanzi degnamente, et corrispondere all'opinione conceputa de noi tanto dai Magnifici signori Stati, come anche da tutti i nostri amici

“there is expected daily an ambassador from Transilvania, with whom I will deale so effectually and ouerlooke him so narrowly, that though I will not aduenture a promise from his master, yett I doubt not to change the present condition, or to putt him to such a purgation that hee will bee loath to vndergoe...I haue giuen intimation to Gabor, butt not by letter (for I yett trust him not) of his shame to bee so mutable; of his failing his frends, of his playing double with these [the Turks].”¹³²

If, despite all efforts, the dishonorable act was executed, there was still hope to achieve a counteract later: “it is not impossible that Gabor may redeeme his honor for conscience, shame or necessitye.”¹³³ Such a dishonorable act was perceived as an offense, which, if it was not amended later, justly called for revenge. The revenge consisted of the unpleasant confrontation of the actor or his representative with the condemnation of the action and through it the actor himself and the revealing of the misdeed to the general public, thus destroying his honor and reputation. Isaac Wake seems to have been especially keen on such a step and fervently asked the secretary of state: “if it may bee left free to Sir Thomas Roe and to mee.....wee will soe vnmaske him...that wee will undoe him, and reape the benefitt of reuenge at least, if nothing.”¹³⁴

Money

As it could be seen above, financial matters created problems even among allies. They also became a key issue in the relationship of the prince of Transylvania and the states that promised some subsidy to him upon his acceptance in the Treaty of Westminster, similarly to the king of Denmark, in order to maintain his army. In Roe’s judgment the sum agreed was almost nothing compared to the other expenses of England spent on the war,¹³⁵ still, it could not be spared. As he expressed it in his letter written to the English resident in Venice: “a diuersion will secure him and

¹³² Roe, *Negotiations*, 324.

¹³³ *ibid*, 781.

¹³⁴ *ibid*, 722.

¹³⁵ *ibid*, 510.

falicitate his owne dessignes: but the mouer, aqua ad molam, must be money.”¹³⁶
Bethlen was promised to get his first monthly installment in June 1627,¹³⁷ before which he had made peace with Ferdinand.

The issue of money connected to the diversion by Bethlen gradually drew in the front. At the very beginning no one mentioned money as one of the instruments to motivate the prince; what is more, Roe explicitly claimed he did not need it, based on the custom that his troops were paid from the booty. As the cooperation became realistic, Bethlen expressed his desire to receive some subsidy from the anti-Imperialist states, and Roe still thought that it could be paid without any scruples: “to allow him some mony from the league wilbe no difficultye and great good husbandrye; for he will not aske a great summe; and I know, with the chardge of raysing, arming and paying 3000 men in our parts he is able to rayse and pay 15000; and I am perswaded, small blowing will kyndle fuell so apt to burne.”¹³⁸

However, the bailo, as Césy reported, called the amount “a misery,”¹³⁹ and it soon became evident that Bethlen had clear and resolute ideas about the sum of money he should receive. When finally the participants managed to agree about a concrete amount, in his argumentation the prince followed the norms, pretending that, though money was important, it was secondary after the common goals, claiming that his previous wars with the Emperor were all waged for the service of the others and the just goals. The main line of his argument was that he had already spent all his money on the common cause and now, too, the only reason he enters the war again is the same. As a good prince, he cannot put so many burdens on his nobility, but needed

¹³⁶ *ibid*, 608.

¹³⁷ *ibid*, 580.

¹³⁸ *ibid*, 377.

¹³⁹ BnF F 1650, 629r. *une misere*

other resources. This conflict mirrored the clash of the two common goods - that of the state and that of the community of states:

“the prince had now replied, that if, some years past, he had hazarded his owne estats, and consumed his treasures for loue to his frends, and lately, at the instance of the Hollanders and the count of Torne, anewe taken armes and expected some supplies, whereof hee failed; it could not bee doubted that hee receiued with great content this declaration and that hee was much more ready to embrace the seruice and protection of twoe so mighty kings [French and English]; protesting in the name of a Christian, that hee had no other interest, nor designe, but the liberty of Germany: for which hee would imploy all his forces.....hee would show himselfe so feruent a loue of the publicque good, that hee would vnite with him [Mansfeld, general on the side of the Protestant Union] all his forces; but restreyned this promise, that thereupon their majesties should not so ground themselues, as to neglect the performance of the moneys, in which he trusted their kingly words...to show that he did not engage himselfe only for mony, hee was content to abate 80 thowsand, to those princes that did pay him by aduancing 3 or 4 dayes on euery muster, hee would make but 10 in the yeare, for their aduantage.”¹⁴⁰

Bethlen, as an instrument, appeared so beneficial, that not only was the sum agreed, but the French and the Dutch residents did receive a large portion of the amount to be paid to Bethlen at Constantinople. Roe was the only one who did not receive any money, which made him frustrated and dissatisfied. When he listed all the means he tried to engage Bethlen, quoted above, he draws the bitter conclusion: all he wants is money:

“Gabor useth the name of liberty, as it hath reference to the aetas aurea:¹⁴¹ He must be payd, like a Swizze or Janizary, euery two moneths, or hee will mutine and beleue no man, not other rethoricque, but his sense of feeling. Duty to his majestie enforceth me to this playnes: fayre words will not pass current with him; but if he touch mony, there is no doubt he will breake with the emperor tomorrow, if he made peace with him yesterday.”¹⁴²

This conclusion about Bethlen’s motivation together with his comparison with mercenaries or Turkish soldiers, was highly negative and ignominious. The image thus created about Bethlen was that of a prince whose sole interest was monetary gain. Roe did not take into account Bethlen’s former explanations about his empty treasure-house due to his two previous wars and the impossibility of expecting the nobility to

¹⁴⁰ Roe, *Negotiations*, 510-511.

¹⁴¹ aetas aurera: the golden age, a concept used by Ovid, Virgil and Tacitus, too. Here Roe makes a witty shift connected to the sense of “gold” continuing with Bethlen’s only desire is money.

¹⁴² Roe, *Negotiations*, 646.

furnish the war with more money. Roe's view was not shared by Césy. He understood Bethlen's request for financial aid, since "having declared twice or three times during the past years that being without money he thinks it necessary to receive now some amount in order to satisfy his army...to make it seen that he does not engage himself this time so easily as he has done."¹⁴³ Most probably it was the disappointment of the English resident that led him to view the prince a mercenary. It is important to outline that both of the diplomats regarded the prince as a private man, not as a statesman responsible for his state and, among other things, its financial conditions. The image of a prince considering the common good of his country did not emerge.

Dissimulation and artifices

Prudence, which was supposed to inform the practices, could wonderfully connect the old and new humanist language of politics. As it was mentioned in the first chapter it stood in the center of both as the indispensable tool for the art of government. Being derived from both Aristotelian and Roman traditions,¹⁴⁴ it was found in all humanist writers, elevated among the virtues in humanist political discourse and generally held at least as important for governance as strength.¹⁴⁵ Nevertheless, there was one crucial difference between the senses it meant. For the civic humanist and scholastic thinkers true prudence was inseparable from virtue.¹⁴⁶ Despite the fact that this view found proponents among the later generations, such as Harrington in his *Oceana*¹⁴⁷ or Frederick the Great in his *Anti-Machiavelli*, prudence became regarded by many as

¹⁴³ BnF F 1650, 508v-509r. sestant declare deux ou troys foyz les années passées sans argent il croit necessayre pour contenter sa millice d'avoir maintenant quelque somme...pour fayre voir quil ne sengage pas cette foyz legerement come il a fait

¹⁴⁴ Tuck, *Philosophy and Government*, 122.

¹⁴⁵ Bredshaw, Brendan. "Transalpine Humanism" in Burns, J. H., Goldie Mark eds. *The Cambridge History of Political Thought, 1450-1700*. 95-131. (Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991). 107-110.

¹⁴⁶ Church, William Farr, *Richelieu and Reason of State* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972), 58.

¹⁴⁷ Viroli, *From Politics to Reason of State*, 127.

the required intellectual quality for political conduct without its being conditioned on virtue. With this shift it became the basis for a separate approach to state affairs and the view that all rulers have a duty to follow the dictates of not merely of equity but also of prudence became general.¹⁴⁸ Lipsius, whose *Six Books of Politics* became a popular reading in Europe presented prudence as the guiding force that should lead the decisions of statesmen and princes. He allowed for moderate frauds provided they were to serve the common good.¹⁴⁹ His views were so popular, that the book by Francis Bacon, *Of Simulation and Dissimulation*, appears to be a collection of Lipsius' ideas.¹⁵⁰ Dissimulation in Botero's book was defined as "feigning what you know as if you did not and hiding your preferences, show yourself uninterested in what affects you closely."¹⁵¹ In the French court the same view was held, dissimulation was absolutely accepted, but not the intentional distortion of the truth.¹⁵²

Dissimulation and artifices as tools in interstate relations appear to have been generally tolerated, accepted and applied. When an act of dissimulation is reported by the ambassadors no comment of moral or ethical nature is attached to it. It does not attract more attention than the subject in connection with which it happened. The degree of disguise and artifice applied by the prince of Transylvania seems to have overstepped the boundaries of what was regarded normal in general. It was the excessive character of his changeability and inscrutability that embarrassed his contemporaries, not the means he applied. As it could be seen he counteracted all logic other than his own, and those who wanted to make use of him continuously complained about his unreliability. The bailo concluded that "it is difficult to believe

¹⁴⁸ Skinner, *Foundation of Modern Political Thought*, I. 251.

¹⁴⁹ Lipsius, Justus. *Politica. Six Books of Politics or Political Instruction* (Uitgeverij Van Gorcum, 2004) 642-646.

¹⁵⁰ Malcolm, *Reason of State, Propaganda, and the Thirty Years' War*, 102.

¹⁵¹ Botero, *Reason of State*, 48.

¹⁵² Church, *Richelieu and Reason of State*, 82.

this prince full of so many artifices” and continued remarking about his ambassador that “this subject filled with artifices...nourished hope and anxiety in one part as well as in the other.”¹⁵³ The English ambassador also reaches the same conclusion: “He [Bethlen’s ambassador] useth greate familiaritye with the emperors agent, who seems as confident as wee, that hee is of that syde; and hee exuseth it to us, that he hath such order to enterteyne him, while he layes his foundation sure.”¹⁵⁴ Before Bethlen’s second attack on the Emperor the residents shared the view about him according to which he was problematic, but still devoted to the common cause. As Roe put it in his letter to the secretary of state about Bethlen’s offers and conditions: “from these operations and counsels of Gabor, though in them is too much artifice, yet his sincerity to the general quarrel is approved.”¹⁵⁵ He also emphasized that this amount of dissimulation is unusual and he attributed it to the character of the people living in that part of the world:

“the people with whom wee trafficque, Hungars, Siculi, and Transylvanians, eyther so gross, or so false, and their master so subtile, eyther by nature or necessitye, that you will find I haue enough to do to disintangle my selfe from their laberinth....but their dissimulations somewhere are so deepe, that I cannot penetrate them; yet may excuse my selfe that where a prince is forced to vse arts of all sydes, to spinne into length his hopes, and to deceiue his owne ministers and friends, it wilbee no shame to be deceiued with them.”¹⁵⁶

By 1628 Gábor Bethlen’s strategy of having several irons in the fire severely undermined his credibility and resulted in the general opinion of him voiced by Wake upon the occasion of the prince’s new designs: “those who will beleue any longer in that prince, shall deserue to be deceaued. I, for my part, haue now expounded him out of all the articles of my fayth; where he shall haue no further place hereafter, but such

¹⁵³ Óváry, 733. Difficil e prestar fede a questo Principe pieno di tanti artifici ... quel soggetto pieno d’artificii, al qual torna conto il nutri speranze et gelosie in una parte et l’altra

¹⁵⁴ Roe, *Negotiations*, 388.

¹⁵⁵ *ibid*, 424.

¹⁵⁶ *ibid*, 475.

as Pilate hath in the creede”¹⁵⁷ and “newe ouertures and proppositions of his owne...which may seeme not altogether vnworthy to be hearkened vnto; if his often breach of faith and promise haue not rendered him to obnoxious vnto suspition of fraud and deceite...he that hath played one false bound will play two”¹⁵⁸ Roe in a disillusioned letter written to Elizabeth expressed his deep disappointment: “not doubting...but my lord Carleton hath acquaynted yow with the last sceane of our play, which hath ended all in falsehood.”¹⁵⁹ Bethlen appears to be a case of the application of dissimulation and artifices to such an extent, that not even present-day historiography can precisely define his goals. This resulted in his contemporaries’ describing his actions as originating in falsehood, through which his expressed goals were questioned. It is important to underline that it was this perceived falsehood and not the fact that he applied dissimulation and artifices that his contemporaries complained about.

The bailo related his discussion with the ambassador of the Emperor who said that the Porte wanted to conclude peace with Ferdinand but the prince aimed at “dragging the treaties long, in order to elicit with his usual artifices the contributions from the others.”¹⁶⁰ Roe, describing the flow of his discussion with the agent of Bethlen writes: “He hath beene with mee, and after some dissimulation, discovered an inclination in that prince to peace; but protests, one of the conditions he will require of the emperor shalbe the restitution of the Palatinate,”¹⁶¹ and he comments on the appearance of peaceful relations between Bethlen and the Emperor saying: “knowing

¹⁵⁷ *ibid*, 701.

¹⁵⁸ *ibid*, 711.

¹⁵⁹ *ibid*, 723.

¹⁶⁰ Óváry, 697. tirando le trattationi longo, per tirar con li soliti artificii dalli altri le contributioni

¹⁶¹ Roe, *Negotiations*, 175.

all the complements between the emperour and him to bee deepe dissimulations and painted dissidence.”¹⁶²

Dissimulation as a strategy seems to have been indispensable in interstate relations in the period given the slowness of information flow and the insecurity regarding the reliability of sources, not to mention its mutual character. With the application of this tool a situation could be held pending as long as it was possible, which allowed for a more suitable decision when finally a step had to be taken. A good example for this way of thinking was the behavior of the Porte in Roe’s interpretation, which had agreed, for the sake of peace, to the performance of certain favors that were disadvantageous for the Ottoman Empire “which they will neuer performe; but hope that the emperour, beeing busy in Germany, will not too exactly demand it nor stretch the cord too farre; and that they may passe a yeare or two with dissimulation vntill their affairs are better settled in Tartary and Asia.”¹⁶³

Dissimulation was also used to hide certain pieces of information from others, this way avoiding the generation of unwelcome acts from the other side. Césy related to his superior how he did not reveal his thoughts to Bethlen’s ambassador when he told him that “all Hungary and Transylvania wants nothing but peace, concerning which I did not reply them anything which could have acquainted them with what I inclined to.”¹⁶⁴ Roe, without any news about the money promised to Bethlen but still desperately intending to keep the prince armed against the Emperor, managed to write a letter to Bethlen in such a way that even his peer, Wake, having read the original, misunderstood its content thinking the financial contribution had arrived in

¹⁶² *ibid*, 473.

¹⁶³ *ibid*, 287.

¹⁶⁴ BnF F 1650, 281v. toute la Hongrie et Transylvanie ne vouloient que la payx surquoy ie ne leur respondys rien quy leur peult fayre cognoytre a quoy i’inclinoys

Constantinople.¹⁶⁵ He surely did not mean to lie, since for the same reason he avoided meeting Bethlen's ambassadors because "without mony I shall blush to promise it."¹⁶⁶ But he chose the words in an intentionally misleading way. Needless to say these two main goals, dragging time and hiding information, mutually reinforced each other and frequently resulted in a complete perplexity of the residents' activity.

Nothing shows better that dissimulation was viewed as a normal and acceptable tool than the fact that those who applied it, or made an attempt, openly acknowledged their deeds without any embarrassment or shame. The Venetian resident in England reported about the Danish ambassador sharing with him the secret, namely that they will move six thousand peasants to join the army against the Emperor which "he did not want to make public here in order not to hinder the [English] assistance."¹⁶⁷ Roe also openly acknowledged his dissembling both to the grand vizier and his superiors. During his visit to the Porte the grand vizier asked him what the aim of the Transylvanian ambassadors was in his opinion. Roe did not tell him the true reasons to which "hee repliyd, that I dissembled; that they new I was acquainted with their business; and that, as a frend to the port and an ambassador to a king opposite in religion to the emperour, I should deliuer my opinion truly and clearly; for therein they would take my counsell...Therefore I confessed the truth."¹⁶⁸

Césy was dissatisfied with himself not being able to dissemble enough in connection with the case of the patriarchate of Constantinople: I "could disguise my intervention in this affair well enough so that no-one knew I was the promoter, and when once this Cirill is reestablished, God knows the wrong he will do to the

¹⁶⁵ ibid, 686.

¹⁶⁶ ibid, 687.

¹⁶⁷ Óváry, 797. non ha voluto pubblicar qui, per non ritardar le assistenze

¹⁶⁸ Roe, *Negotiations*, 85.

Catholics.”¹⁶⁹ Roe told the secretary of state about his maneuver at the Porte to nullify Bethlen’s treaty in which he succeeded. It is noteworthy that he again expressed his view about the practical advantages of claiming to act out of friendship and used this as a disguise to achieve his ends: “I have already procured the disavowing of the last treaty secretly, and undiscovered to what end, under color of revealing some of his last articles, as a friend to this state.”¹⁷⁰

If a situation called for dissimulation, there are no signs of any hesitation. In lack of any instructions Roe could not negotiate with Bethlen’s authorized ambassador, but he was also afraid of losing the opportunity for cooperation, so he resolved: “I must still entertain him with arts and delays, which I fear he will not depend upon.”¹⁷¹ It was prudence that prescribed the application of this tool, as it can be seen from the bailo’s wording: “prudence seems to me convincing to dissimulate.”¹⁷² It is prudence again, as the bailo reported, based on which the English resident suggested the Caimacam the application of dissimulation towards Bethlen: “he counseled him to dissimulate and to hold him [Bethlen] as much as he can, sending him under some pretext one of these much experienced and faithful Turkish principals, in order to understand well how the negotiation was going and in order to bring him developments and progress.”¹⁷³

¹⁶⁹ BnF F 1650, 209v. moy quy nay pue sy bien desguysen mes entremises en cet affayre quon naye sceu que ien estoys le promoteur, et quand une fois ce Cirille sera restably Dieu scait le mal quil fera aux catholiques

¹⁷⁰ Roe, *Negotiations*, 324.

¹⁷¹ Roe, *Negotiations*, 378.

¹⁷² Óváry, 781. la prudenza pare a me presuade a dissimular

¹⁷³ ibid, 730. egli lo consiglio a dissimulare, e tenerselo al meglio che si puo, mandando di la sotto qualche pretesto uno di quei Turchi principali molto pratici et fedeli, per intender bene come passava il negotio, et portar li suoi andamenti et progressi

Reason of state

Beside the concept of *interest* another term, *reason of state*, marked the presence of a new approach to state affairs. By the time the seminal book written by Botero was published (1589), reason of state was the subject of lively discussions.¹⁷⁴ Botero's piece became so popular that it had five more Italian editions until 1606.¹⁷⁵ A number of other works followed with the same title, but the writers did not employ the term in the same way. Some regarded it simply as political prudence, others that the conduct of government cannot be called like that if it follows the ordinary legal channels. This view was criticized for suggesting that reason of state necessarily meant an illegal pursuit, and claimed that all actions derive from reason of state if their goal is the preservation of the particular form of government. By 1620s all the points were made, including the distinction between true and false or Christian and Machiavellian reason of state all being divided according to the willingness to comply with ethical and religious norms.¹⁷⁶ Naturally, views proposing exclusively the old humanist values and denouncing reason of state also emerged in Europe.¹⁷⁷ The concept of reason of state and the cluster of terms around it such as interest and necessity became popular primarily in Italy, France and the Low Countries.¹⁷⁸ According to the report of the French ambassador to Clement VII, the Pope himself claimed that, in line with reason of state, sovereign princes may lie and betray and break treatises and alliances.¹⁷⁹ In Italy a contemporary remarked in 1616 that even the fishmongers in the marketplaces

¹⁷⁴ Tuck, *Philosophy and Government*, 43-44.

¹⁷⁵ Burke, Peter. "Tacitism, Scepticism and Reason of State" in *The Cambridge History of Political Thought 1450-1700*, edited by Burns, J.H. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 479.

¹⁷⁶ *ibid*, 480-481.

¹⁷⁷ *ibid*, 131.

¹⁷⁸ *ibid*, 43.

¹⁷⁹ Church, *Richelieu and Reason of State*, 55.

quoted reason of state.¹⁸⁰ In the French court already under the rule of Catherine de Medici a group of Florentine dissidents started to openly apply Machiavelli and Tacitus,¹⁸¹ this way laying the foundations for an easy reception of the reason of state theory. The daring pro-Protestant politics of Richelieu accelerated the development of a reason of state concept that was able to align the interest of the state and the interest of religion.¹⁸² However, as the variety of opinions and the complaints of some authors testify, people had confused ideas about its essence.¹⁸³

Despite the fact that the expression *reason of state* had long been introduced to the wider public before the 1620s, it can be found unexpectedly rarely in the letters. In line with its easy reception in France described above, reason of state appears in the highest proportion in the French papers with six instances on about one third as many lines as the English papers have. Other sources also suggest that a regard to reason of state even in the rhetoric was more frequent in French politics than in the case of other states. At the negotiations preceding the Peace of Westphalia a member of the French delegation complained about the Swedish attitude because in his observations “the faction and the interest of the protestant religion dominate much more in their spirit than the reason of state.”¹⁸⁴

In the English papers I found ten instances. Even if I may have missed some cases this amount compared to the abundant usage of interest can hardly be considered representative of anything else than the fact itself, that although the concept was well-known in the early seventeenth century, it did not form a basic component of the

¹⁸⁰ Viroli, *From Politics to Reason of State*, 266.

¹⁸¹ Tuck, *Philosophy and Government*, 40.

¹⁸² Church, *Richelieu and Reason of State*, 44.

¹⁸³ Viroli, *From Politics to Reason of State*, 268.

¹⁸⁴ Osiander, *The State Systems of Europe*, 28. “la faction et l’interet de la religion protestante domine beaucoup plus dans leur esprit que la raison d’état.”

political language of interstate relations. This statement is further strengthened by the complete absence of the expression from the Venetian papers I read. This suggests that reason of state was not an accepted component of the Venetian political language, which is further supported by two facts. Firstly, no Venetian thinker mentioned reason of state, only Boccalini condemned Botero for claiming that reason of state can be anything else than ruthless self-interest,¹⁸⁵ which is a rather negative view. Secondly, the Council of Ten refused the publication of Boccalini's commentaries on Tacitus in order to avoid that *raggione stato* be subject of public discussion.¹⁸⁶

Still, on the basis of this small sample some observations can be made. In both sources the presence of reason of state as a source of counsel in political decisions was represented as normal and right. Sir Robert Amstruther, the extraordinary ambassador to the King of Denmark summarized his thoughts in the following way: "Although I must not presume of the king of Denmark, yet I doe not despayre, for he is a wise and prudent prince, and (God willing) I will giue vnto him good grownds and *reasons of state*."¹⁸⁷ The text unambiguously shows that wisdom and prudence, the centuries old virtues of princes was assumed to lead them to yield to reason of state. The English resident described Bethlen's efforts to make himself acceptable even for the Catholic Polish noblemen as a possible future king and reported that the prince "hath not omitted to attempt them with some insinuations of conformity, butt especially by ioining himselfe in that common rule, of opposing and excluding all the kindred and frends to the emperour. To this he hath added *reason of state*."¹⁸⁸

¹⁸⁵ Tuck, *Philosophy and Government*, 102.

¹⁸⁶ *ibid*, 101.

¹⁸⁷ Roe, *Negotiations*, 323.

¹⁸⁸ *ibid*, 313.

The concept was generally seen as the main factor in the policy of a state, thus it was possible to predict the future behavior of a state on the identification of what moves reason of state would prescribe. Both Césy and Roe applied the term when they reported about the firm intention of the Porte to maintain peace with the Emperor. Césy wrote: “as I observe, their spirits are still greatly inclined to the peace with the Emperor, just as, in fact the *reason of their state* requires it, since one does not need to be a great personality in order to judge that a war as important as the one they are waging with the Persians demand the continuation of a long treaty with the Emperor, rather than seeing the Ottoman forces diverted and engaged in Hungary.”¹⁸⁹ In 1627 and 1628 the residents attempted to excite the officials at the Porte to resist the pressure for peace on the part of the Emperor, but they could not succeed in it because, in Roe’s wording, “to hinder the ratification of the peace...is not in the power of any bribe; being concluded in a publicque councill. And not only *reason of state* and the inclination of the viziers, doe require peace, but the soldiers wilbe ready to stone any man.”¹⁹⁰

Reason of state found its place close to the aspect of safety, but, very much like interest, did not include it. Safety preserved its own place in the vocabulary. Answering the question of the grand vizier whether it was true that some Christian princes had made leagues Roe replied, as he related, “that it was also true that the king of France, the state of Venice and duke of Savoy had entered into league to free the Valteline and the Grissons from the yoke of Austria; *reason of state* and the care of

¹⁸⁹ BnF F 1650, 598v. leur esprits que iobserue toujours grandement portés a la payx avec lempereur come en effect la rayson de leur estat le requiert, car il ne fault pas estre grand personnage pour juger qu une guerre sy importante que celle quils ont avec le persien demande plus fort la continuation dune longue traité avec l’empr que de voir les forces ottomans diuerties et engagées dans la hongrie

¹⁹⁰ Roe, *Negotiations*, 813.

their own safeties warranting them in this action, those countries being the passages between Italy and Germany, and under their protection.”¹⁹¹

Césy also appears to have shared Roe’s view that reason of state should prevail in the decision making of every state, even the Ottoman Empire, and that should be represented by the officials, too. He informed his superior about the bassas of Buda and Bosnia, whose practices hindered the implementation of the will of the Porte because “they take sides with those who give them more without regard to all *reasons of state* and all the commands of the Porte.”¹⁹² Paradoxically Roe portrayed Césy and his actions as contrary to reason of state. By 1627 their religious controversy over the influence on the Greek Church had totally poisoned their relationship. The peak of this fight was the moment when the Jesuits became banished from Constantinople as a consequence of the activity of the English, Venetian and Dutch residents. In order to achieve the withdrawal of this sentence the French resident threatened the Porte with his departure and a ban on any commerce between the subjects of the French king and the Turks. These steps Roe found foolish and doomed to failure. He reported that

“he [Césy] hath put all to hazard ... so that eyther he must goe away...It were very strange if such care were taken for 5 brouillons [muddleheaded], to leave an ancient profitable traficque: but we are confident, that his impudence is nourished from Rome; from whence, by such like actions, he hath upheld his broken credit agaynst his masters honor, and all *reason of state*”¹⁹³

Both quotations express the view that reason of state is an important aspect which should guide not only the decision makers but also their representatives (the bassas and the French ambassador). It defines what steps would be expedient and it might advocate solutions that serve the goal which, otherwise, the decision makers

¹⁹¹ ibid, 341.

¹⁹² BnF F 1650, 218r. a luy qui leur donnera le plus les portent de son costé nonobstant toutes raisons d’estat et tous les commandments de la Porte

¹⁹³ Roe, *Negotiations*, 743.

would not incline to apply. This was the case with the prince of Transylvania as it becomes clear from the letter Roe sent to Elizabeth:

“I must ever fall upon my old discourse. There is no man so fit and able to retrieve the oppressions of Germany; and if there be some that will be hardly drawn to have a good opinion of him, yet his fortune is so great in present, and so much greater in expectation, that *reason of state* will persuade to take him into better consideration.”¹⁹⁴

Even if reason of state proposed decisions that otherwise would not have necessarily been taken, it did not mean that this motivation excluded a concern with morality. Beside its integration in the vocabulary so concerned with virtues, reason of state and the traditional elements complemented and in some cases even supported each other. It could stand in one line with honor, for example, when reasons behind a decision were listed. Roe in his letter to Bethlen gave advice how to influence the Porte not to stop fights with the Emperor after Mansfeld’s arrival to the region writing “your highness may please to aduise them, that hauing vpon the grand signors command receiued count Mansfelt, and his troopes, their retraict, both in *reason of state and honor*, must bee considered, before any conclusion.”¹⁹⁵ It is noteworthy that in the quotation reason of state appears next to honor, just like interest did. They both fill in a place which had been exclusively occupied by *profit* or *benefit* a hundred years earlier. The replacement of *profit* by the two terms suggests that their meanings moved along the same line, but the early seventeen century political language found interest and reason of state more appropriate to describe the state-centered motivation.

As these few examples show, similarly to the concept of interest itself, reason of state was acknowledged as a just aspect in decision making. In Roe’s interpretation the Venetians also used references to state reason, though it is questionable whether they really uttered this term or Roe interpreted their message this way, to justify their

¹⁹⁴ *ibid*, 312.
¹⁹⁵ *ibid*, 591.

reluctance to contribute financially to the diversion by Bethlen.¹⁹⁶ The Porte resolved not to make an open breach with the Emperor in February 1627 “for some reasons of state”¹⁹⁷, and even a year later it was reason of state that resulted in a firm decision about the maintenance of peace for the Ottoman Empire¹⁹⁸ in May 1628. It is interesting to see reason of state in the plural, as in the last quotation or in Amstruther’s letter above. The usage of the plural makes the whole concept less abstract and presents it as a collection of various reasons that happen to be expedient, but lack the essence of the original concept and makes it an alternative term for interest. It might even be regarded as an outcome of unintentional attempts to make the concept of reason of state sound more natural.

Reason of state in itself, even lacking the support of good opinion, sufficed as the ground for a political decision. It did not need to be hidden; otherwise Roe would not have incorporated it so openly in his argument for cooperation with Bethlen written to Elizabeth and quoted above. It is important to note that among the references to reason of state not one emerged that could be regarded as obviously negative or morally wrong, despite the fact that some of the theoretical literature distinguished between good and bad reason of state and the circumstances would have allowed for such a moral dismissal of the opponents. As for the differentiation of the two types of reason of state Césy gives a clear testimony of his acquaintance with this distinction, but unfortunately he does not explain what he means by true and false reason of state. Writing about the cruel struggle between him and the English, Dutch and Venetian resident over the person of the patriarch of Constantinople, he described

¹⁹⁶ *ibid*, 640.

¹⁹⁷ *ibid*, 612.

¹⁹⁸ *ibid*, 813.

how his opponents intended to manipulate the Turks in order to weaken the position of the Catholics.

“The Turks are very mistrustful and enemies of all the novelties which the Christians seek...and Cirille who is now in possession of the patriarchate with the assistance of the ambassadors of England, Venice and the States not only has been strengthened in his see but he could easily raise the interest of the Turks *by false or true reason of state* and make the bad fall on the ecclesiastics and the Roman Christians of this empire like they wanted to do in the past days with the Jesuit fathers whom I defended in the name of Your Majesty.”¹⁹⁹

It is a question whether the Italian version of the term, *ragion di stato*, has any negative sense as opposed to the neutral character of “reason of state”, or Burke is right in claiming that the English at least until the 1620s used the Italian name,²⁰⁰ which would account for its appearance in the English papers. The two examples found in the English sources can be interpreted in both ways. The first appeared in a letter to Roe from the secretary of Isaac Wake at Venice, in which he gave news of the proceedings with the Parliament:

“which by this time (if noe Spanishe practice hinder it) I hope is assembled. There was nothing made me more confidente of this proceedinge then that Sir Edward Cooke, Sir Edw. Sandes and Sir Wiliam Joanes were not long agoe sente commissioners into Irelande; for it is nowe growne (I may saie at this distance) *ragion di stato* to banishe men by employmente.”²⁰¹

Branthwait’s reference to the safety of distance from England, which provides him with the liberty to share his opinion about the practice at London calling it *ragion di stato* suggests that the term carried a negative overtone.

The other example emerges from Roe’s description of the practices of the Spanish court. Given his hostility to Spain and the contrast he emphasizes between

¹⁹⁹ BnF F 1650, 302r. les Turcs sont tres soubconneux et ennemys de toutes les nouveautes recherchees par les chrestiens...et Cirille quy est maintenant en possession du patriarchat assiste des ambrs D’angleterre de Venise et Hollande non seulement se rafermiroit dans son siege mays il pourroit facilement intheresser les turcs par de faules ou vrais Raysons D’estat et fayre tomber le mal pour les eclesiastiques et sur les chrestiens Romains de cet empire comme ils font voullu fayre ces iours passés sur les peres Jesuytes que jay deffendue au nom de V. Mté

²⁰⁰ Burke, *Tacitism, Scepticism and Reason of State*, 480.

²⁰¹ Roe, *Negotiations*, 217.

their professed Catholicism and their secret dealings with the Turks out of reason of state, one has the impression that *ragion di stato* is considered incompatible with a Catholic/Christian attitude. On the other hand it could be also argued that Roe's emphasis is on the controversy between the professed ethics of Spanish politics and their practice. No matter which interpretation is correct, one can detect the negative overtone attached to *ragion di stato*:

“from these seuerall practices may bee concluded, that *ragione di stato* hath as much interest in the counfills of Spaine as their catholicque title; wherewith they vpbrayde all others that only exchange wooll for goats haire with these people [Turks] and may teach vs to leave that tenderness, vim vi opponere et virtutem dolo [force opposes force and deceit virtue].”²⁰²

Interest and Reason of State

The question arises what relationship existed between *interest* and *reason of state*. Botero in 1598 wrote that reason of state is little else than reason of interest,²⁰³ and Bethune in 1633 also held this view, saying that “reason of state is nothing but reason of interest.”²⁰⁴

First of all, references to reason of state could be made parallel with the application of the humanist vocabulary, so the term was not regarded as contrary to the already existing value system, similarly to the case of interest. The two appear as equally important aspects on their own right, none of them subordinated to the other. Césy in his first letter written to the King mentions both as explanations for why the grand vizier, who maltreated the Christian merchants, is so unpopular at the Porte:

²⁰² ibid, 422.

²⁰³ Malcolm, *Reason of State, Propaganda and the Thirty Years' War*, 94.

²⁰⁴ Burke, *Tacitism, Scepticism and Reason of State*, 482.

“the grand vizier, to whom all the councilors oppose *because of interest and because of reason of state*, since this bassa did not respect any of the friends of this Empire.”²⁰⁵

While interest and reason of state genuinely supported each other, private interests might have opposed reason of state. Again, writing about a Turkish official Césy concludes: all he does is either by chance or *by particular interest rather than reason of state*.”²⁰⁶ In another similar comment of his it is prudence that appears on the side of reason of state: “Mansul vizier not doing anything for *reason of state nor because of prudence*, but because of *interest and because of passion*.”²⁰⁷

Although interest can be read on the other side now in the phrase, it denotes in this context particular interest and not the public one. Interest could be particular or public, and when particular it could denote the personal interest of an individual or of a prince, the latter meaning the interest of his state. Reason of state did not have such a range to cover (common interest, interest of a state and particular interest) as did interest; it seems to have meant only the interest of a state. The facts that firstly reason of state was nonetheless distinguished from interest and secondly it was significantly less frequently used suggest that it could not enter the discourse more than marginally. Interest could be more easily connected to the old discourse for two main reasons. Firstly, its variability in usage allowed for its becoming a quasi synonym for common good. Secondly, similarly to the terms used in the traditional discourse, it could be attached to individuals, princes and states. Reason of state, on the contrary, could not

²⁰⁵ BnF F 1650, 2r. premeir vizir a quoy tous les grands du conseil s’opposent et par interest et par raison d’estat, Car ce bacha na respecté un seul des amis de cet Empire

²⁰⁶ ibid, 16v. tous se faict soy par hazard ou par Interests particulier plustost que par raison d’estat

²⁰⁷ ibid, 201. Vizir mansul qui ne faisant rien par raison déstat ni du prudence ? par intherest et par passion

find attachment points either to concrete terms or to the general approach due to its highly abstract character, focusing on the abstract concept of the state.

In some cases this high level of abstractness was decreased by using the term in the plural, which made it equivalent with concrete goals. However, with this move the term was deprived of its essential sense and became identical with the application of the interests of the state. The English resident explained the Prince of Transylvania the current situation at the Porte that “it was not expedient at this instant, for some *reasons of state* to me expressed, to command him [the bassa of Buda] to invade the emperors dominion, and to make an open breach.”²⁰⁸

Reason of state denoted those considerations which were connected to the interests of the state. It is important to note that no clear boundary could be drawn between the meaning of reason of state and interest when discussing what counted as expedient to a state. It seems that the particular interest of a state, as opposed to the common interest, and reason of state meant the same, only the former was much more frequently used and the latter had a highly abstract sense. This phenomenon might well derive from the perception of state relations as patterned after human relations. Interest could be connected to both the state and the prince whereas reason of state presupposed a more abstract conception of state as an end to itself, which could not integrate smoothly in the vocabulary, due to the lack of compatibility of the interpersonal characteristic of the prevailing frame of concepts and language. The Venetian example shows that interest was totally absorbed by the language of interstate relations, but reason of state could not gain strong footholds in it. Let me add one more assumption. If the interest of the state and reason of state meant mostly the same, they filled in a vacuum in the language of interstate relations. As it has been

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Roe, *Negotiations*, 612.

discussed in connection with the concepts of common good and common interest, the relation of an individual state to the community of states was unclear. Interest and reason of state emerged to fill in this gap and represent the needs of a state towards the others, and acknowledge their existence.

I believe the reason why references to *necessity* were not satisfactory enough for the political language which adapted interest and reason of state in a relatively short time compared to the centuries-long uniformity of the Ciceronian language of politics, lies in the different approach to the state they represent. The latter considered the state as the community of virtuous men formed for the preservation and promotion of the common good. The former regarded the state as an entity in itself, which had its own way of assessing events. Necessity concentrated only on the aspect of preservation of a state and allowed non-ethical actions on the edge of self-preservation, just like in the case of individuals. The novelty that the employment of interest and reason of state brought was the proclamation that states had their own point of view reached through prudence. It is important to emphasize that this point of view only occasionally resulted in unethical behavior. The theoretical literature naturally focused on the scandalous issue of the possible trespassing of divine and natural laws, but the sources reveal that in the language of interstate relations reason of state had no prominent place and was mainly regarded as the equivalent of interest.

Conclusion

The Normative Language of Early Seventeenth Century Interstate Relations

The close examination of the normative language of early seventeenth century interstate relations based largely on the correspondence of diplomats working at the same time at the same place in the 1620s revealed the existence of an elaborate framework of concepts and terms generally applied by the contemporaries. This common language did not confine itself to the occasions of being officially presented, such as in manifestos or peace treaties, but also constituted an indispensable part of communication in everyday diplomatic work. The bulk of the language appears to have belonged to the so called old humanist tradition, which had been in use for several centuries. It was shaped by the early humanist value system and vocabulary, which firmly held its position even in the early seventeenth century. The terms *virtue*, *friendship*, *affection*, *service*, *justice*, *peace*, *common good* and *liberty*, *just war* and the cluster of words around them functioned as the pillars of the discourse, which showed no terminological difference from the interpersonal social discourse. Interstate relations appeared as patterned after interpersonal relations, in which the figure of the prince had a central role. An analogous thinking shaped the views about the relationships between states, as human constructions, which resulted in the transfer of the concepts and legal thinking to the supra-state level.

While the vocabulary was fixed, the concrete meanings and senses of the words could vary according to situations and users. Still, it would be a mistake to attribute solely rhetorical role to the fixed terms in the present sense, which would suggest the lack of true substance. Firstly, rhetoric was considered an efficient tool

rather than an ornamental device, even if in a number of cases the original meaning of the word did not have a role to play. In the diplomatic context these utterances always conveyed some meaning and were interpreted as messages. Users could select from a given stock of available terms and argumentations and they chose the ones they found most efficient in the actual circumstances. This practice lay behind the conduct of Bethlen's ambassador who emphasized the service of the Protestant cause in his negotiation with the English resident, but argued for the cause of liberty and justice when he visited the French and Venetian diplomats.

While terms could and mostly did have multiple senses, the boundary among which was vague in many cases, this caused little headache to the users who came from the same cultural background. The application of a term to a concrete situation was not necessarily congruent for the people involved in the discussion, as exemplified by the English resident's astonishment at Turn's labeling the fight against the Emperor a *public cause*, and his later application of it. It tells a lot about the fluidity of the actual content of the terms that some time later he himself used the expression in that sense. Misunderstandings could occur as well, as in the case of the concrete sense of *liberty* for the French and the German princes' delegation at the peace negotiations. More serious misconceptions came to light in the communication of the Christian diplomats and the Turkish officials, as it happened in the case of the expressions *friend to friend and enemy to enemy* and *amicos omnes*.

The discourse mirrored a generally professed value system which regarded men as naturally sociable and inclined to live in peace and friendship. Cicero's piece, the *De Amicitia* and the approach it proposed can be viewed as the seminal literature and the fountain of core ideas about true friendship in the Renaissance. The strong ties

of love and respect, and the resulting reciprocal benefits constituted the foundations of friendship which received great emphasis in the language used by the representatives of “friendly” states. The regular expressions of constant affection and the performance of services, which fell in the category of mutual benefits, were meant to imitate friendship, which had a number of concrete senses ranging from simply peaceful relations to a formal alliance. Despite the fact that friendship based on utility was acceptable in both the Aristotelian and the Ciceronian heritage, it had no place in the interstate political language. Without the presence of emotions interstate behavior would have seemed utility-driven, thus it would have contradicted the Ciceronian ideal. In the discourse the noblest type of friendship needed to be displayed. Strong emotions were to fill the hearts of the virtuous actors not only in connection with their friends but also with the goals considered most valuable: common good, liberty and peace. Ideally, this double emotional bond served to secure the reliability of partners in a cause. Emotional attachment was regularly expressed by the actors involved, both princes and ambassadors, who all claimed its true existence behind their actions.

Justice, the common good and liberty had been established values, too, since Antiquity. The traditionally acknowledged targets in political life constituted the objects of zeal, aims that were virtuous enough to fervently and ceaselessly work for. The driving force, again, was the emotional commitment, beside the moral conviction. The overall presence of emotions subordinated to prudence and ethics appears as a value in itself in this case, too. The princes and statesmen defined the concrete meanings of these terms in the context of their age. Their achievement was supposed to stand in the center of their activity. Emotions and passions were laudable as long as they served the concrete goals defined by the prudence of the virtuous statesmen and diplomats. In such cases strong emotions and prudence reinforced each other.

If a prince conducted his rule in violation of any of these values, he was termed a tyrant, and as such, liable to being attacked. Waging war against tyranny was considered to be just not only in by the sufferers of an actual state of tyranny, but also by their friends and allies, who thus felt entitled to actively participate. As the frequent references to the ambition of the House of Austria for the establishment of a universal monarchy in the argumentation exemplify waging war in order to pre-empt a very probable future threat of tyranny was also considered just.

During the second half of the sixteenth century the traditional language absorbed a genuinely new component, *interest*. The wide application of this term not only next to but also embedded in the old humanist system and quickly taking the place of *profit* and *benefit* implies that by that time a vacuum appeared in the vocabulary and the system of concepts which was connected most probably to the development of states. Where the vacuum lay can be reconstructed by the function the new concept had. Its role was to add to the already existing system a new aspect, that of the representation of the abstract state. What is more, interest introduced a new concern, the preservation and extension of the power of the actual state stood in its focus instead of the objects of zeal listed. It was a completely new morality, which at some points contradicted the traditional one, but in general could smoothly fit, not being pronounced in its fullest nature. Its introduction did not mean a break with the traditional values, but rather a fusion with them. Interest could be easily incorporated in the traditional system at three points. Firstly, it found a place in the hierarchy of causes for the activity of a prince, in which the common good remained the noblest one, and ambition could be found at the bottom. Interest, which was associated with self-preservation, was placed between the two. Secondly, it could also well find its place under the conduct of prudence, the virtue that formally remained the same

throughout the centuries but in reality it became separable from virtue, most probably parallel with the appearance of *interest*. Thirdly, another point for integration was the possibility to apply common interest as the synonym of common good. This usage became extremely popular. However, employment of *interest* did not bring a major shift in the language because the very essence of the concept could not be applied openly. While the diplomats tried hard to discover with the help of their prudence the interest of the other states through observation and logical thinking (attributing to it, once discovered, more reliability than to any other considerations), they made little reference to the interest of their own states. Reference to common interest and the interest of another state caused no problems, but to justify an act exclusively through self-interest in front of the representatives of other states was unimaginable or evoked condemnation. This duality (the acknowledgement of interest as an important, or the most important, factor in decision making, and the restraint from its presentation as a just motivation) might also account for the unproblematic merge of the two discourses. It is important to emphasize that the interstate political language did not follow the acknowledgement of the central role of self-interest in human conduct as a great part of the contemporary theoretical literature did. Instead it heavily relied on the old humanist worldview and tried to incorporate interest in it, for example through expressing a concern for the interest of another state as a sign of true friendship.

The fact that interstate relations were patterned after human relations had an effect not only on the legal issues, but also on communication and ideas about the motivating factors of the activity of princes and statesmen. States were friends, like individuals, and thus expressed their emotions in the Ciceronian discourse on the one hand, while on the other hand they were following their interests similarly to men in the state of nature according to the ideas of the new humanist one. The description of

relationships among states as individuals resulted in the transfer of the interpersonal vocabulary to the state level. This seems to be one of the reasons why the concept of reason of state, evidently exciting for contemporaries, could find but a marginal place in the normative language of interstate relations. Without having a role in interpersonal language it was too abstract and too vague to strike root there, contrary to the case of interest.

Justification of actions on religious grounds in front of the whole community appears to have descended to a secondary place in the interstate discourse. Without question it was a strong motivation for many diplomats involved and a fervently discussed topic between co-religionist individuals, princes and states, still, on the official level the offenses the Protestant communities suffered were treated as subject of tyranny and fought against through the temporal terms related to tyranny, such as usurpation, oppression and liberty.

The comparison of the language use appearing in the three main sources suggests the side-by-side existence of various degrees of applications of the old and new humanist discourses. All of them were familiar with both the vocabulary and the rules of its usage. But while in the English sources the use of the old and new language is balanced (e.g., the number of references to common good and common interest is approximately even), the Venetian and the French ones apply the language of interest to a greater degree than the Ciceronian humanist terms (much more frequently, say, common interest than common good). No doubt, they were capable of the full display of the traditional terminology, but they seem to have reserved it for the more official occasions of communication, or in case someone clearly talked in the old style to them (such as the Huguenot traveler). This phenomenon does not necessarily

suggest the existence of a tendency in time, which would result in a shift in the English political language, too, within a few decades, it could also stem from regional differences. This question can be answered only through further research. What can be claimed based on these sources is that the domination of the traditional language was solid enough to be regarded as the obligatory frame of discourse. The ethical norms were vividly present in the rhetoric.

Besides providing a vocabulary in which generally understandable messages could be formulated, the frame of the language also constituted limits to verbal performance. For this reason it can be regarded as normative in a double manner. Firstly, it conveyed the ethical norms of political conduct that needed to be professed and followed at least in appearance. Secondly, it did not allow for any deviation, the norms dictated the forms, too. In all cases the speaker needed to squeeze what he had to say within these boundaries and the actions had to be accounted for in a way that was acceptable from the aspect of the value system as it was displayed in the normative language. For this reason pretexts and excuses were required to be given upon the occasion of any unexpected move, and they also had to be formulated in an acceptable way in order to exempt the actor from blame. The English resident refused to give support to the count of Turn at the Porte fearing it might supply the Emperor with a pretext to stop the peace negotiations with the English delegation at Brussels, if he had really intended to, but would not do without a just cause. This leads us to an important feature of not only the political language itself, but also of the motivations behind political conduct, namely the imperative to conform with the norms which, in this case, also meant conformity with the forms. The striving to present justification for a war or acceptable excuses for failing to deliver on a promise was powerful. It seems that this practice was driven not primarily by legal thinking but rather by the

peculiar character of the political culture. Not being able to present an acceptable justification meant the acknowledgement of unethical conduct, which would have brought shame and a flaw in honor and reputation, both of which were of primary significance in the period and the preceding centuries. I suspect that this motivation lay behind the requirements for the justification of wars as well, in the first place. For this reason views that regard the post-Medieval and pre-Westphalian interstate relations as chaotic or being in a crisis because of lacking a superior authority and a generally applied international law are wrong. The force of the urge for compliance with the ethical code, that is to be virtuous in a humanist sense, was strong enough to secure the well-functioning of these relations, especially because it included the expectation of respecting the laws, too.

Possible directions for further research

As it has been touched upon, a number of points call for further research. The most immediate direction should be the expansion of this analysis to the language use of the diplomatic correspondence of the court of the main opponent, the Emperor. Having covered that one could move back or forward in time. Examining early fifteenth century sources could help in the definition of the “pure” political language that was inherited, since, at this point it is not clear when certain terms were adopted in the relevant vocabulary and how their meaning changed. For example, the secondary literature connects the frequent use of the terms necessity and dissimulation to the appearance of new humanism, although they had been in use since Antiquity. Also, it would be very interesting to see when the Venetian and the French political language started to use interest so widely and whether it can be connected to any specific historical context. Shifting the focus to a later period might lead to learning more

about the ways in which the parallel usage of the two humanist vocabularies changed or remained untouched by the second half of the seventeenth century. I would devote special attention to the employment of reason of state, particularly to the question whether it managed to gain more foothold or faded away. This would add further refinement to the image of it in present day secondary literature. And last, but definitely not least, a highly exciting direction, and a topic for another dissertation, would be a thorough comparison with the Ottoman political language used in the period.

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