

TRUST IN EARLY MODERN INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL THOUGHT, 1598–1713

Can there ever be trust between states? This study explores the concept of trust across different and sometimes antagonistic genres of international political thought during the seventeenth century. The natural law and reason of state traditions worked on different assumptions, but they mutually influenced each other. How have these traditions influenced the different concepts and discussions of trust-building? Bringing together international political thought and international law, Peter Schröder analyses to what extent trust can be seen as one of the foundational concepts in the theorising of interstate relations in this decisive period. Despite the ongoing search for conditions of trust between states, we are still faced with the same structural problems. This study is therefore of interest not only to specialists and students of the early modern period, but also to everyone thinking about ways of overcoming conflicts which are aggravated by a lack of mutual trust.

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PETER SCHRÖDER
University College London



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For Béatrice Maleville

Contents

<i>Preface</i>	<i>page</i> ix
Introduction	I
1 Alberico Gentili (1552–1608): New Ways of Posing the Problem of War and Interstate Relations	14
1.1 Confessional Strife and the Question of Trustworthiness among European States	17
1.2 A New Concept of the Enemy and War – Trust among Equals	31
1.3 Pirates and Other Enemies <i>Hors La Loi</i> – The Untrustworthy Foes	35
2 Plans For Universal Peace in Europe – The Limits of a Balance of Power	45
2.1 Sully (1559–1641) and the <i>Grand Dessein</i>	48
2.2 Crucé (1590–1648) and the <i>Nouveau Cynée</i>	69
3 <i>Jus Naturae Et Gentium</i> – The Limits of a Juridical Order	89
3.1 Hugo Grotius (1583–1645)	92
3.2 Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679)	104
3.3 Samuel Pufendorf (1632–1694)	119
4 The Struggle for Hegemony and the Erosion of Trust	137
4.1 Leibniz (1646–1716) and his <i>Guerre Des Plumes</i> against Louis XIV’s Claims to Hegemony	141
4.2 ‘Triomphe De La Foi’ – Religion and Interstate Relations after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes	154
4.3 The Abbé De Saint-Pierre’s (1658–1743) Project for Peace and his Challenge to Early Modern Statecraft	176
5 The <i>Doux Commerce</i> and Interstate Relations: Trust and Mistrust in the Emerging Economic Discourse	199

Conclusion – The Thing Which Was Not	219
<i>Bibliography</i>	227
<i>Index</i>	267

Preface

The idea for this book was first conceived in 2007 when I presented some preliminary ideas on Alberico Gentili at a conference at New York University. As is the case with large projects like the one I have been pursuing over the last decade, I accumulated an amount of intellectual and other debts which are difficult to acknowledge here. My home institution provided excellent conditions for research and a whole host of fascinating colleagues with whom I could share some of my ideas. Despite all the absurdities universities increasingly have to cope with these days, *University College London* still provides one of the best environments for teaching and research I have encountered during my academic life. It is, *malgré tout*, a pleasure to belong there. Financial help was made available by the *Leverhulme Trust* in 2009 with one of their generous *study abroad fellowships*, which allowed me to encounter and discuss different approaches from a range of academic disciplines. Short-term visiting professorships at the *Sorbonne IV* and the *École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales* in Paris, as well as the *Sapienza* in Rome, were stimulating and also great fun. I cherish in particular the memories of my discussions with Lucien Bély, Luc Foisneau and Patrice Guennifey in Paris and Andrea Branchi, Tito Marci and Arianna Montanari in Rome. A short fellowship at the *Center for Advanced Studies* at the Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität in Munich provided excellent working conditions and access to sources I had previously been unable to get hold of – even in the digital age we live in. A substantial part of the writing was facilitated by a VLAC Fellowship at the *Center for Advanced Studies of the Royal Flemish Academy of Belgium for Science and the Arts* in 2011–2012. I am very grateful for all the support I received from these institutions.

Among the many friends and colleagues who discussed my ideas and this work with me over many years I want to mention at least a few. Benjamin Straumann commented on some of my chapters. His astounding knowledge helped me to formulate some of my own ideas. He will not blame me for challenging some of his readings on Gentili. Knud Haakonsson, Ian

Hunter, Martti Koskenniemi and Michael Seidler read and commented on at least part of the final manuscript. Their knowledge and expertise provided helpful challenges of which I hope to have met at least a few. They have supported me in numerous ways well beyond this project over many years. John McCormick and John Robertson were equally always there with their support when I needed it. Ruth Brown and Tristram Barrett helped unfailingly whenever I bothered them with my erratic questions. I value their friendship beyond the intellectual exchange. Kinch Hoekstra has been much more difficult to meet up with since he went to Berkeley, but I am very glad that we have managed to stay in touch since our days in Oxford so that I can at least occasionally enjoy his wit and humour.

I owe the greatest debt to David Saunders, whom I first met at a conference in Brisbane in 2001. Not only has he read my manuscript twice, he is actually still talking to me. The many discussions we have had at the Café Bonaparte over the last decade served as a kind of clearing house for the ideas and arguments I develop in this book.