

## FRANCIS BACON ON PEACE AND THE 1604 TREATY OF LONDON

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**Abstract:** The article argues that for Francis Bacon (1561-1626), across his political, philosophic, and literary career, the criterion for one's own peace is the weakness or incapacity or impotence of one's opponents. The article proceeds in two parts. The first outlines Francis Bacon's view of peace, particularly in relation to the Hobbesian view of peace which arises, in part, in opposition to it. The second lays out Bacon's view of peace in relation to his positions on several of the foreign policy issues of his own time, particularly treaties and empire, and the polemical uses to which Bacon put his view of peace to critique and criticize the 1604 Treaty of London.

**Keywords:** Francis Bacon, Thomas Hobbes, political philosophy, peace, war.

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Writing in the famous chapter thirteen of his *Leviathan* in 1651, Hobbes defined war as the time within which the will to contend by battle is sufficiently known.<sup>3</sup> That definition has three components: a temporal component, the time; a volitional or voluntary component, the will; and an epistemological component, sufficiently known. Hobbes compares war to the inconstant weather: war is a dispositional property, where there is a disposition to fight without assurance to the contrary, there is war. Hobbes's definition of war is followed sharply by its antinomy: "All other time is peace."<sup>4</sup> Peace is defined by Hobbes as not war. If two states (or persons) have a settled disposition to peace, where state X doesn't want to fight with state Y and vice versa, and where both know that neither wants to fight with the other, there and then, we have peace.

In this article, I shall first outline Francis Bacon's view of peace, particularly in relation to the Hobbesian view of peace which arises, in part, in opposition to it. Second, I will lay out Bacon's view of peace in relation to his positions on several of the foreign policy issues of his own time,

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<sup>3</sup> T. Hobbes, *Leviathan* [1651], ed. E. Curley (Indianapolis and Cambridge, 1994), XIII.[8], p. 76: "a tract of time wherein the will to contend by battle is sufficiently known."

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*

particularly treaties and empire, and the polemical uses to which Bacon put his view of peace to critique and criticize the 1604 Treaty of London.

As we have seen, in the *Leviathan*, peace is defined by Hobbes as not war. Moreover, Hobbes's view of peace is importantly *dispositional*: If two states (or persons) have a settled disposition to peace, and where we both know that neither wants to fight with the other, there and then, we have peace. For Bacon, by contrast, peace is not “not war” and war is not “not peace”.

Across his political career, from the 1590s to the 1620s, Bacon persistently conceived of war on the model of a trial. In his 1592/3 *Certaine Obseruations vppon a Libell*, Bacon posited that “warres are no massacres and confusions, but they are the highest trialles of right, when princes and States that acknowledge no superior vppon earth shall putt themselves vpon the iustice of God for deciding of their controversies by such successe as it shall please them to give on either side.”<sup>5</sup> Reiterating this definition in 1594, Bacon described “Warrs, which are the highest Trialles of Right, between *Princes*, (that acknowledge no superiour Jurisdiction;)”.<sup>6</sup> In 1624, arguing for war with Spain, Bacon defined wars as “suits of appeal to the tribunal of God's justice, where there are no superiors on earth to determine the cause”.<sup>7</sup> At trial, as in war, both sides seek to win; yet in war, unlike at the bar, there is no higher judge (or none active in the courtroom) to arbitrate the disputes of right or justice. For Bacon, wars are trials of right and justice between “princes and States” where the role of the judge in the courtroom is ambiguous, and it seems that none but the parties may decide the case. But unlike Hobbes, Bacon does not couple or pair his definitions of war and peace as comprehensive and mutually exclusive.

If war is a trial of right without temporal arbitration, how then does Bacon conceive of peace? While at times, as in the *Advancement of Learning* (1605), Bacon seems to define peace qua order, qua rule: peace is the opposite of anarchy (which may contain war) rather than the opposite of war,<sup>8</sup> Bacon's dominant definition of peace claims that there can be true peace and false peace. An objector might reasonably ask, what can that possibly mean?

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<sup>5</sup> *OFB I, Certaine Obseruations vppon a Libell*, p. 343, ll. 13-17.

<sup>6</sup> *OFB I, A True Report of the Detestable Treason Intended by Doctor Roderigo Lopez*, p. 449, ll. 443-445.

<sup>7</sup> *LL VII, Considerations touching a War with Spain*, p. 470. For twentieth century notions opposed to the Hobbesian picture of peace, see S. G. Zeitlin, “Interpretation and Critique: Jacob Taubes, Julien Freund, and the Interpretation of Hobbes,” *Telos* 181 (Winter 2017), pp. 9-39, at pp. 18-20.

<sup>8</sup> Bacon, *Advancement of Learning [AL]*, Book I, in *SEH III*, p. 302; *OFB IV*, p. 38, l. 35 to p. 39, lines 1-15: “Neither is certainly that other merite of learning, in repressing the inconueniencies which grow from man to man;

In his 1625 essay “Of Unity in Religion”, expanded from the 1612 essay “Of Religion”, Bacon argues that in politics and religion a state of affairs surely to be avoided is the condition of false peace.<sup>9</sup> This notion of a false or an untrue peace was not peculiar to Bacon but was prominent in the Essex circle. In his *Apologie* of 1598, the Earl of Essex had deployed the notion of a “peace without ground”<sup>10</sup> in seeking a treaty with Spain, whilst claiming, in his advocacy for renewed martial exploits against Spain that “I have ever thought wars the diseases and sicknesses, and peace the true naturall and healthfull temper for all estates.”<sup>11</sup> In this tract, Essex juxtaposed peace upon “true principle” to the kind of stalemate punctured by raids, battles, and covert war, which Essex thought obtained between England and Spain in the late 1590s, during the Armada Wars.<sup>12</sup> In Bacon’s 1604 *Apologie in certaine imputations concerning the late Earle of Essex*, Bacon credits himself as an inspiration with pricking Essex on to write the latter’s own *Apology*, dedicated to Anthony Bacon, Bacon’s elder brother, an Elizabethan intelligencer and spy.<sup>13</sup>

Is there an implicit opposite to false peace? In “Of Unity in Religion,” Bacon presents two different kinds of false peace—ignorant peace and contradictory peace. Bacon identifies peace with unity, and opens his essay on “Unity in Religion” with the claim that religion must be reduced to “the true Band of *Unity*”—implying that religion must conform to the conditions of

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much inferiour to the former, of relieuing the necessities which arise from nature; which merite was liuely set forth by the Ancients in that fayned relation of *Orpheus* Theater; where all beasts and birds assembled: and forgetting their seuerall appetites, some of pray, some of game, some of quarrell, stood all sociably together listening vnto the ayres and accords of the Harpe; the sound whereof no sooner ceased, or was drowned by some lowder noyse; but euerie beast returned to his owne nature; wherein is aptly described the nature and condition of men; who are full of savage and vnreclaymed desires; of profite, of lust, of reuenge, which as long as they give ear to precepts, to lawes, to religion, sweetly touched with eloquence and perswasion of books, of sermons, of haranges, so long is societie and peace maintained; but if these instruments bee silent; or that sedition and tumult make them not audible; all thinges dissolue into Anarchie and Confusion.”

<sup>9</sup> See *OFB XV*, “Of Unity in Religion. III.” p. 14, ll. 101-107.

<sup>10</sup> R. Devereux, *To Maister Anthonie Bacon, An Apologie of the Earle of Essex, against those which fasly and maliciously taxe him to be the onely hinderer of the peace, and quiet of his countrey* (London, 1600 [1598]), sig. B3 verso.

<sup>11</sup> Devereux, *An Apologie of the Earle of Essex*, sig. A verso.

<sup>12</sup> Devereux, *An Apologie of the Earle of Essex*, sig. B3 verso. See also the selections from Essex, *An Apologia* [1598], quoted in D. Du Maurier, *Golden Lads: A Study of Anthony Bacon, Francis and their Friends* (London, 2007 [1975]), pp. 234-236. On Francis Bacon’s relation to the Essex circle, see A. Gajda, *The Earl of Essex and Late Elizabethan Political Culture* (Oxford, 2012), pp. 19-21; 73-74; 86-89; 124-125; 152-155; 190-199. See also A. Gajda, “The State of Christendom: history, political thought and the Essex circle,” *Historical Research* 81 (2008), pp. 423-446.

<sup>13</sup> *LL III, Sir Francis Bacon his Apologie in certaine imputations concerning the late Earle of Essex*, pp. 139-160, at p. 145: “and I think this speech of mine, and the like renewed afterwards, pricked him to write that Apology which is in many men’s hands.”

true peace.<sup>14</sup> Bacon seems to think that for peace there are grounds, whether states of affairs or material conditions (such an instance might be that one's opponents are not in a position to wage war effectively against one).<sup>15</sup> When talking of false peace, Bacon identifies unity with peace, and then notes that “There be also two false *Peaces*, or *Unities*; the one, when the *Peace* is grounded, but upon an implicite ignorance, For all Colours will agree in the Darke: The other, when it is peeced up, upon a direct Admission of Contraries, in Fundamentall points.”<sup>16</sup> False peace, for both Bacon and for Essex in the latter’s 1598 *Apologie*, is juxtaposed to “durable peace” or peace of greater duration or, in Bacon’s 1624 *Considerations*, to “true peace.”

How then does Bacon understand this “true” peace? In his *Considerations touching a War with Spain*, Bacon makes reference to the views of “Clinias the Candian,” the Cretan interlocutor with the stranger from Athens and Megillus the Lacedaemonian, who, on Bacon’s recounting of Plato’s *Laws*, “speaks desperately and wildly” in maintaining that “there were no such thing as peace between nations”.<sup>17</sup> Bacon presents Plato’s Clinias, maintaining the position that that which is called peace is a naked and empty name (*Quam rem fere vocant pacem, nudum et inane nomen est*).<sup>18</sup> Bacon classes this position on peace as an “excess of speech” but holds that in it “there is thus much that may have a civil construction; namely, that every state ought to stand upon his guard, and rather prevent than be prevented.”<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> OFB XV, “Of Unity in Religion. III.” p. 11, ll. 5-6.

<sup>15</sup> Compare “Styx, sive Foedera,” in *De Sapientia Veterum, SEH VI*, pp. 633-634. See also Robert Devereux on the power of the King of Spain in *An Apologie*, sig. A4 verso: “Let mee euer see his strength decrease, though his malice increase rather then beleue in his faith and good nature, when his strength is great.”

<sup>16</sup> OFB XV, “Of Unity in Religion. III.” p. 14, ll. 100-105. Bacon had previously mentioned “Points Fundamentall and of Substance in *Religion*” (p. 13, ll. 66-69) when he was expounding his notion of “the League of Christians.” Is it the case, for Bacon, that all peace between Christian peoples and states amounts to a “false peace” to the extent that “the League of Christians” is abrogated or ignored?

<sup>17</sup> LL VII, *Considerations touching a War with Spain*, p. 476. Compare Plato, *Laws*, 626a. This Platonic reference is noted in K. Hoekstra, “Thucydides and the bellicose beginnings of modern political theory,” in *Thucydides and the Modern World: Reception, Reinterpretation and Influence from the Renaissance to the Present*, K. Harloe and N. Morley eds. (Cambridge, 2012), pp. 25-54, at p. 52n134. Candia is an alternate name for Crete.

<sup>18</sup> LL VII, *Considerations touching a War with Spain*, p. 476. For the political background to this work, see L. Jardine and A. Stewart, *Hostage to Fortune: The Troubled Life of Francis Bacon 1561-1626* (London, 1998), p. 494; N. Malcolm, *Reason of State, Propaganda, and the Thirty Years’ War: An Unknown Translation by Thomas Hobbes* (Oxford, 2007), pp. 82-84; F. de Vivo, “Making sense of the news: Micanzio’s letters, Cavendish, Bacon, and the Thirty Years’ War,” in *The Renaissance of Letters: Knowledge and Community in Italy, 1300-1650*, P. Findlen and S. Sutherland eds. (London, 2020), pp. 293-317.

<sup>19</sup> LL VII, *Considerations touching a War with Spain*, p. 476.

To the view of Clinias, who asserts that there is no such thing as peace between nations, Bacon juxtaposes his view of the attributes of “true peace”—a true peace, on Bacon’s account, rightly obtains when a nation or state cannot be harmed militarily by its neighbours, opponents, or enemies, even if they wished to do so.<sup>20</sup> This “true peace” is enjoyed by those powers whose enemies are impotent to do them harm, according to the maxim “that there is no sure league but impuissance to do hurt.”<sup>21</sup> In Bacon’s view, rather than enter into league with one’s adversaries, it is better to ensure that they are fully endowed with the “impuissance to do hurt”, which is to say, fully disempowered.<sup>22</sup> Bacon’s Clinias therefore serves his argument as that of a useful foil deployed to sharpen and contour his own position.

Bacon conceives of peace as the impotence of one’s enemies to do one harm. Theoretically, this means that peace can potentially be relative between different states: state A can be at peace with state B, but not vice versa. Similarly, this means that peace can be more or less secure: the less able an adversary is to *potentially* harm one’s own state, the greater one’s own security and the surer one’s own peace. Theoretically, this also means that *peace* can be consistent or co-temporal with declared war. Micronesia could declare war on the United States and the United States could remain at peace, or, the Vatican could declare a holy war on Elizabethan England, under some conditions, without Baconian peace being violated.

Indeed, Bacon seemed, paradoxically, to hold something like this view from the 1590s onward (that is to say, very early in his political career indeed). Even earlier than his 1624 *Considerations*, in his 1592/3 *Certaine Obseruations vppon a Libell*, Bacon deployed this same citation from Demosthenes’ *Against Aristocrates* to assess the security situation of England in the immediate aftermath of the Spanish Armada. Writing out his assessment of England’s power position in the face of all its adversaries, Bacon reflected that “I do find it to be a securitie of that nature & kinde which *Iphicrates* the *Athenian* did commende; who beinge a Comissioner to

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<sup>20</sup> *LL VII*, pp. 476-7: “As for the opinion of Iphicrates the Athenian, it demands not so much towards a war as a just fear, but rather cometh near the opinion of Clinias; as if there were ever amongst nations a brooding of a war, and that there is no sure league but impuissance to do hurt. For he, in the treaty of peace with the Lacedæmonians, speaketh plain language, telling them, there could be no true and secure peace, except the Lacedæmonians yielded to those things, which being granted, it would be no longer in their power to hurt the Athenians, though they would.”

<sup>21</sup> *LL VII*, p. 476.

<sup>22</sup> Bacon advanced versions of this argument from at least 1609 onwards and as late as in the final year of his life. See “Styx, sive Foedera,” in *De Sapientia Veterum*, *SEH VI*, p. 634, and *Apophthegmes new and old*, §144, in *OFB VIII*, p. 237.

treate with the State of *Sparta* vpon Condicions of peace and hearing the other side make manie propositions touchinge securitie, interrupted them & told them *Ther was but one manner of securitie wherupon the Athenians could rest, which was, If the Deputies of the Lacedemonians cold make it plaine vnto them, that after these and these thinges parted withall, the Lacedemonians should not be able to hurte them though they would.*<sup>23</sup> While some scholars have insisted that Bacon's standard for surety in peace is so unattainable as to yield "hostility with no real prospect of cessation,"<sup>24</sup> Bacon himself explicitly held not only that the standard was attainable but further held it to have been historically attained, especially for England's power vis-à-vis its adversaries in the immediate aftermath of the thwarting of the Spanish Armada in the summer of 1588. As Bacon stressed in his 1592/3 *Certaine Obseruations vppon a Libell*, applying the standard of Iphicrates' true peace to England in the aftermath of the Spanish Armada "as we have not iustlie provoked the hatred or enmitie of anie other State; so howsoeuer that be, I knowe not at this time the enemie that hath the power to offende vs though he had the will."<sup>25</sup>

Importantly, although England and Spain found themselves to be in declared war when he wrote his *Observations*, Bacon maintained in print that England's security was such that Spain couldn't really attack their metropole effectively (a not insubstantial portion of the Spanish navy having been destroyed four years previously). Nonetheless, this did not lead Bacon to sue for a treaty for the cessation of arms. As peace admits of degrees of surety and future longevity, Bacon urged further raids, attacks and naval expeditions against Spain in the 1590s and lamented the end of the conflict when it came with the Treaty of London in 1604.

Let us illustrate Bacon's view with an example drawn from Roman history, an example which Bacon offers himself. In his *Advancement of Learning* Bacon describes the Emperor Hadrian as spending "his whole Raigne, which was peaceable, in a perambulation, or Suruey of the Romane

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<sup>23</sup> *OFB I*, p. 368, ll. 739-747.

<sup>24</sup> Hoekstra, "Thucydides and the bellicose beginnings of modern political theory," p. 53: "Again we have universal hostility, and what is more, hostility with no real prospect of cessation, for the only guarantee is the impotence of the other." To the same author's credit, his references to Bacon's repeated usage of Iphicrates and Demosthenes, *Against Aristocrates*, are more complete than the relevant commentaries in the *Oxford Francis Bacon. Ibid.*, p. 53n135, where "[*SEH*] XIII:358" should read "*LL I*:167" or "[*SEH*] VIII:167". Cf. A. Stewart, "Commentary," in *OFB I*, p. 836; M. Kiernan, "Commentary," in *OFB VIII*, p. 555.

<sup>25</sup> *OFB I*, p. 368, ll. 747-750.

Empire”.<sup>26</sup> Now, not insignificantly, the reign of the Emperor Hadrian (117-138 C.E.) was cotermporal with the Third Roman-Jewish War, the Mered Bar Kokhba, the Bar Kokhba Revolt in which some historians, such as Dio Cassius, estimate that more than half a million Jews perished in fighting.<sup>27</sup> Bacon’s point in describing Hadrian’s imperial reign as “peaceable” is not his ignorance of Roman history or some belief that the Bar Kokhba Revolt or the Third Roman-Jewish War was not a war. It fits Bacon’s definition of war as a trial by arms. Rather, Bacon’s point would be that Bar Kokhba never really had the military capacity to challenge the Roman empire with any expectation of success: peace for Rome, understood as the power gradient based upon overwhelming military capacity that secures Rome’s rule (above all in its metropole rather than its periphery) was never threatened, in Bacon’s estimation, by the revolt. Baconian peace is peace *for someone*. Peace for Rome is compatible with war for Bar Kokhba.

By now it should be clear that in addition to being a substantive and relative view of peace, Bacon’s theory of peace is an alibi for empire and for peace through military hegemony as well.<sup>28</sup> It is a definition of peace which is not one understood as the absence of armed conflict. Bacon’s view of peace, as the impuissance of enemy states to do one’s own state harm, is something Bacon considered desirable and something which was not inconsistent with Bacon’s

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<sup>26</sup> Bacon, *Advancement of Learning*, Book I, *SEH* III, p. 305; *OFB* IV, p. 41, ll. 16-27: “*Traiane* erected many famous monuments and buildings, insomuch as *Constantine* the Great, in emulation was wont to call him *Parietaria*, Wall flower, because his name was vpon so many walles: but his buildings and workes were more of glorie and tryumph, than vse and necessitie: But *Adrian* spent his whole Raigne, which was peaceable in a perambulation, or Suruey of the Romane Empire, giuing order and making assignation, where he went for reedifying of Cities, Townes, and Forts decayed: and for cutting of Riuers, and streames: and for making Bridges and passages, and for pollicing of Cities, and Commonalties, with new ordinances and constitutions: and graunting new Franchises and incorporations: so that his whole time was a very restauration of all the lapses and decayes of former times.” For a similar judgment of the peaceful character of Hadrian’s reign, see E. Gibbon, *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (New York, 1993 [1776]), vol. I, ch. 1, pp. 11-12: “During a long period of forty-three years their virtuous labours were crowned with success; and if we except a few slight hostilities that served to exercise the legions of the frontier, the reigns of Hadrian and Antoninus Pius offer the fair prospect of universal peace.” Yet, in a footnote, Gibbon immediately qualifies his ascription of peace to the reign of Hadrian: “We must, however, remember, that, in the time of Hadrian, a rebellion of the Jews raged with religious fury, though only in a single province”. *Ibid*, p. 12n1.

<sup>27</sup> Cassius Dio, *Historiae romanae quae supersunt*, LXIX.14, cited in M. Mor, *The Second Jewish Revolt: The Bar Kokhba War, 132-136 CE* (Leiden, 2016), p. 470n9; p. 470: “Five hundred and eighty thousand men were slain in the various raids and battles, and the number of those that perished by famine, disease and fire was past finding out.”

<sup>28</sup> For the invocation of peace as an imperial ideal in the history of political thought outside of the works of Francis Bacon, see also M. Idris, *War for Peace: Genealogies of a Violent Ideal in Western and Islamic Thought* (Oxford, 2019), p. xviii.

ambitions for the British empire, and for making distinctions within a notion of peace between imperial metropole and imperial periphery.

In addition to the imperial ambitions which the concept has encoded within it, let us look to what else Bacon might be doing with his concept of peace and how a focus on the concept of peace may contribute to the secondary literature on Bacon and on early modern political thought more broadly.

### *Strategic Obsequiousness: Bacon and the 1604 Treaty of London*

A long tradition of commentary, dating at least to the jaunty polemics of Macaulay,<sup>29</sup> presents Bacon as a water boy for Stuart absolutism and as the crown's mouthpiece (and sometime tattle-tale) in the House of Commons.<sup>30</sup> Not least amongst the oversights of this narrative is that it omits to mention the extent to which Bacon is strategic in his obsequiousness. Bacon does not take up the crown's cause in all matters, nor does he ever defend the Crown's proposals in the terms which James VI and I might have preferred to offer in his own person.

Where Bacon speaks for the Stuart crown on issues such as the union and naturalization of Scottish subjects in England born both before and after James's accession to the crown in 1603, Bacon does not seem especially keen to carry water for or render praise to James's crowning achievement in foreign policy, the 1604 Treaty of London, which ended the Armada Wars and established amicable relations with Philip III of Spain.<sup>31</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> T. B. Macaulay, "Lord Bacon (July, 1837.)," in *Critical and Historical Essays, Contributed to the Edinburgh Review*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. (London, 1848), 3 vols., vol. II, pp. 280-429.

<sup>30</sup> Parts of this portrait of Bacon's obsequiousness persist in G. M. Trevelyan's *England Under the Stuarts* (London, 2002 [1904]), pp. 118-119: "He had taken money without scruple, but he had not put justice up for sale. His fault in this, as in all his public career, was not wickedness, but the absence of any lofty ideal of personal conduct. Having conceived a national policy too broad for acceptance either by Parliament or King, he never practised that which alone can give reality to the scheme of the theorist—the courage and self-sacrifice of the politician. The advancer of human learning could not read in the book of human life; love, friendship, and virtue were little more than names to him; so he turned the abundant energies of his mind to pursue the obvious ends of gold and pomp and honours." For the not unrelated view that Bacon was endowed with a "double tongue" and "the subtle and glimmering superficies of a serpent", see L. Strachey, *Elizabeth and Essex: A Tragic History* (London, 1928), pp. 43-45; p. 245; p. 253; p. 267. Cf. Malcolm, *Reason of State*, pp. 82-83: "Until his fall from power in 1621, Bacon had been quite closely identified with royal policy; thereafter, in his desperate attempts to regain favour and income, he attached himself all the more assiduously to his patron Buckingham—though he did also make an isolated and apparently unsuccessful approach to Southampton. After the failure of the Spanish Match, Bacon lobbied for a much more actively anti-Spanish policy, drafting notes and advice on the military weakness of Spain and the reasons for going to war."

<sup>31</sup> "By the time of his coronation, in July [1603], he had already agreed to a cessation of hostilities with Spain, with whom England had been at war since the 1580s. Commissioners signed the Treaty of London in 1604." M.



In a report of a conference with the House of Lords, delivered to the House of Commons on 22 June 1604, Bacon is recorded as observing that “The nature of the Peace”, then being negotiated by Robert Cecil with Spanish delegations from Philip III, is “Not within the knowledge of this House.”<sup>32</sup> Yet, the absence of the Commons’ competence on the matter of the Treaty did not prevent Bacon from speaking at greater length on what he considered to be the content of the negotiations. The notes in the *Commons Journal* report Bacon’s rather distant assessment of the peace negotiations: “Peace only between the persons of the King of England and Spain:— Nothing articulate:—A mere cessation, or abstinence, from hostility.”<sup>33</sup> Such a cessation or abstinence from hostility fails quite straightforwardly Bacon’s already articulated definition of “true” peace—impuissance to hurt or incapacity to harm, not abstinence from fighting, is the firm Baconian ground of peace. Bacon’s assessment of the Treaty of London during the time of its negotiation hardly counts as a ringing endorsement of the crown’s position. Not only, amidst negotiations for the treaty, does Bacon characterize the negotiating position of his cousin, the Principal Secretary Robert Cecil, as “Nothing articulate”; rather, Bacon’s view also amounts to an implicit critique of the Stuart negotiating position—a mere cessation or abstinence from battle fails Bacon’s criteria of actual or authentic peace.

While Bacon is at best purse-lipped and perhaps tacitly critical of the Treaty of London while the Treaty is being negotiated, the Learned Counsel does not unleash his praises after the Treaty has been concluded. In his 1604 tract, *Certain Articles or Considerations touching the Union of the Kingdoms of England and Scotland*, Bacon notes the Treaty of London as a point of union in “leagues and confederacies” but his qualifications on the point show that he thinks the Treaty of

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Kishlansky, *A Monarchy Transformed: Britain 1603-1714* (London, 1996), p. 70. For a valorization of the treaty by an historian otherwise critical of Stuart policy, see Trevelyan, *England Under the Stuarts*, p. 108: “The peace with Spain, negotiated by James and Cecil in 1604, was the first condition of English development in the seventeenth century.” Trevelyan augments his superlative praise of the treaty, writing that “This peace was one of Cecil’s best strokes of statesmanship, and one of the few cases in which James’s practice of king-craft was not worse than his theory. We refused to admit the illegality of our trade with Spanish America; and we refused to give over carrying Dutch goods in our capacity as neutrals, or to prevent the Dutch from paying English subjects to fight for them against Spain. Thus, while securing in permanence all the advantages of peace, we gave up nothing of our own interests, or of those of our allies the Dutch, who chose to go on fighting a few years longer, until they realized they could not conquer the Spanish Netherlands.” *Ibid.*, p. 108n1.

<sup>32</sup> *Commons Journal*, 22 June 1604 quoted in *LL III*, p. 214. See also P. Croft, “Cecil, Robert,” *ODNB*.

<sup>33</sup> *Commons Journal*, 22 June 1604 quoted in *LL III*, p. 214. For the view that peace need not be equivalent to the cessation of hostilities, see Idris, *War for Peace*, pp. xv-xvi.

London to be a weaker point of union than the firmer grounds which he attests of sovereignty, subjection, religion, continent or territorial contiguity, and language.<sup>34</sup>

Moreover, when Bacon comes to justify the crown positions regarding Scottish Union and Scottish naturalization, he often does so in terms which would obviate the Treaty of London, advocating naturalization and union precisely on the grounds that those policies enhance the war posture of the newly minted Great Britain against Spain. In his speech to the Commons of 17 February 1606/7, Bacon stresses that Scottish naturalization improves the strategic posture of England as it tends to render Anglo-Scottish Union permanent which, in turn, checks the Spanish potential to invade Britain, notwithstanding the Treaty of London.<sup>35</sup>

While Bacon concessively notes that “although the state at this time be in a happy peace,” he continues that “yet for the time past, the more ancient enemy to this kingdom hath been the French, and the more late the Spaniard; and both these had as it were their several postern gates...France had Scotland and Spain had Ireland”.<sup>36</sup> But in addition to blocking French access to England via Scotland, Bacon contends, by Anglo-Scottish Union, Spanish access to Ireland “is likewise cut off by the convenient situation of part of Scotland towards the north of Ireland, where the sore was: which we see, being suddenly closed, hath continued closed by means of this salve”.<sup>37</sup> Scottish naturalization is desirable in 1607, from Bacon’s perspective, not least because it tends to check Spain’s ability to land an invasive force in Ireland, rendering Britain impermeable to Spanish assault. Such impermeability, Bacon suggests, does more than any treaty can or could to keep Britain at peace.

No less does Bacon refrain from justifying Anglo-Scottish Union in terms of waging war against those powers with which the Treaty of London leaves Great Britain in a precarious abstinence from battle. Responding to objections to Scottish naturalization bills that such naturalization would render England overpopulated, Bacon maintains that England, in 1607, does not suffer

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<sup>34</sup> LL III, “Certain Articles or Considerations touching the Union of the Kingdoms of England and Scotland”, pp. 218-234, at pp. 222-224.

<sup>35</sup> LL III, “A Speech used by Sir Francis Bacon, in the Lower House of Parliament, concerning the Article of Naturalization,” pp. 307-325, at pp. 322-323. For commentary on this speech, see E. A. Dolgoy, “The politics of simulation: Francis Bacon, self-knowledge, and the art of lies,” in *Leadership and the Unmasking of Authenticity: The Philosophy of Self-Knowledge and Deception*, B. E. Cushner and M. A. Menaldo eds. (Cheltenham and Northampton, 2018), pp. 113-137, at p. 131n10.

<sup>36</sup> LL III, “A Speech...concerning the Article of Naturalization,” pp. 322-323.

<sup>37</sup> LL III, “A Speech...concerning the Article of Naturalization,” p. 323.

from overpopulation. Sharply dissenting from these objections, Bacon then turns the argument on its head. What if naturalization were to leave England overpopulated, Bacon wonders, “what is the worst effect that can follow from surcharge of people? Look into all stories, and you shall find it none other than some honourable war for the enlargement of their borders, which find themselves pent, upon foreign parts; which inconvenience, in a valorous and warlike nation, I know not whether I should term an inconvenience or no; for the saying is most true, though in another sense, *Omne solum forti patria*.”<sup>38</sup> Quoting from Ovid’s *Fasti*, Bacon implies not only that every land is a homeland for the brave but also that every land may become a homeland for the brave via conquest necessitated by overpopulation. “It was spoken indeed,” Bacon tells his fellow members of the Commons, “of the patience of an exiled man: but it is no less true of the valour of a warlike nation.”<sup>39</sup> Even in justifying the crown’s preferred policies, that is to say, Bacon in 1607 did so in terms directly contravening the spirit, if not also the letter, of James VI and I’s 1604 Treaty of London and his persisting policy of amicable relations with Spain.

At times when discussing the Treaty of London, Bacon descends to the particulars of the Treaty. In a report to the House of Commons on 17 June 1607 reporting the answer of the Earl of Salisbury to a series of merchant requests to be granted letters of marque and reprisal to attack Spanish shipping, Bacon praises “his Majesty’s magnanimity” for refusing the proposed Spanish articles in the Treaty of London which would have prohibited the commerce and colonization of English shipping in the newly discovered “Indies.”<sup>40</sup> Analogizing “the Indies” to the “golden fleece”, Bacon presents James as having “stood firm” in resisting this proposed part of the Treaty of London.<sup>41</sup> Bacon does not present James as having stood firm in those articles of the Treaty to which James assented. One such is “an article in the treaty between Spain and us, that we shall not transport any native commodities of the Low Countries into Spain; nay more, that we shall not transport any *opificia*, manufactures of the same countries.”<sup>42</sup> Bacon reports this article

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<sup>38</sup> LL III, “A Speech...concerning the Article of Naturalization,” p. 313; Ovid, *Fasti*, I. l. 493.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>40</sup> LL III, pp. 352-353: “Yet nevertheless such was his Majesty’s magnanimity in the debate and conclusion of the last treaty, as he would never condescend to any article, importing the exclusion of his subjects from that trade: as a prince that would not acknowledge that any such right could grow to the crown of Spain by the donative of the Pope, whose authority he disclaimeth; or by the title of a dispersed and punctual occupation of certain territories in the name of the rest; but stood firm to reserve that point in full question to further times and occasions. So as it is left by the treaty in suspense, neither debarred nor permitted. The tenderness and point of honour whereof was such, as they that went thither must run their own peril.”

<sup>41</sup> LL III, “A Report Made by Sir Francis Bacon, Knight, in the House of Commons,” pp. 347-361, at pp. 352-353.

<sup>42</sup> LL III, “A Report Made by Sir Francis Bacon, Knight, in the House of Commons,” pp. 347-361, at p. 352.

of the Treaty of London without praise for those who negotiated or for those who signed it. Bacon praises James's "magnanimity" for refusing to sign certain proposed articles of the Treaty of London and he is silent about James's "magnanimity" with regard to what was signed. In the same report to the Commons of 17 June 1607, looking over the Treaty of London as a whole, Bacon surveys "the conditions of the last peace with Spain" and informs his fellow Members of Parliament that these conditions "were of a strange nature to him that duly considers them".<sup>43</sup> Mentioning that amongst the provisions of the Treaty there is no article demanding the withdrawal of English forces from the United Provinces nor any article prohibiting their reinforcement, Bacon reports to the Commons that the Treaty of London itself gives evidence that James "will not lose any ground upon just provocation to enter into an honourable war".<sup>44</sup> Bacon here interprets the Treaty of London as leaving open the possibility for future "honourable" martial engagement with Spain.

Above all, reading the Treaty of London against the presumptive intentions of its signatory, Bacon interprets the Treaty as leaving open the possibility of future war with Spain—a possibility for which he is more enthusiastic than he is for any positive article of the Treaty of London, for which, in all his ostensible obsequiousness, Bacon fails to offer any flattery-laced defence.

Bacon continued his disapprobation of the Treaty of London of 1604 in his *Advancement of Learning*, published the following year in 1605. In that work, addressed to James VI and I, Bacon praised amongst the virtues of his sovereign that of "a vertuous and most christian desire of peace".<sup>45</sup> Yet James's "most christian desire of peace" is not peace itself. Neither is the

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<sup>43</sup> *LL III*, "A Report Made by Sir Francis Bacon, Knight, in the House of Commons," pp. 347-361, at p. 359.

<sup>44</sup> *LL III*, "A Report Made by Sir Francis Bacon, Knight, in the House of Commons," pp. 347-361, at p. 359.

Bacon's judgment of the "honourable" character of retaining aid to the Dutch might seem to find an echo in Hume's *History of England*, where, commenting on the 1604 Treaty of London, the philosopher writes that "Some articles in the treaty, which seemed prejudicial to the Dutch commonwealth, were never executed by the king; and as the Spaniards made no complaints on that head, it appeared, that, by secret agreement, the king had expressly reserved the power of sending assistance to the Hollanders." In the note conjoined to this sentence, Hume continues, "In this respect James's peace was more honourable than that which Henry IV. [of France] himself had made with Spain [in the Treaty of Vervins in 1598]. This latter prince stipulated not to assist the Dutch; and the supplies, which he secretly sent them, were in direct contravention of the treaty." D. Hume, *The History of England*, (Indianapolis, 1983 [1778]), 6 vols., vol. V, pp. 23-24; p. 23 note *f*.

<sup>45</sup> Bacon, *Advancement of Learning* (1605), Book I, dedication to King James VI and I, *OFB IV*, p. 4, ll. 17-27; *SEH III*, pp. 262-263: "And as in your ciuile Estate there appeareth to be an emulation & contention of your Majesties vertue with your fortune, a vertuous disposition with a fortunate regiment, a vertuous expectation (when time was) of your greater fortune, with a prosperous possession thereof in the due time; a vertuous obseruation of the lawes of

fortunate, rather than virtuous, inclination of neighbor princes to make treaties. Elsewhere in the *Advancement*, in reference to the Treaty of London, Bacon notes “the present disposition of these times at this instant to peace”<sup>46</sup>—yet to those aware of Bacon’s definition of peace, dispositions do not suffice.

In Book I of the *Advancement of Learning*, the foreign policy of James’s early reign is subtly juxtaposed to the foreign policy of Elizabeth I. Where James is depicted as having a “most christian desire of peace”, Elizabeth I, his immediate predecessor is depicted as having achieved and maintained “constant peace and securitie”.<sup>47</sup> Moreover, Bacon’s praise of the enduring peace secured across the forty-five year reign of Elizabeth I, from 1558 to 1603, *directly contradicts* the preamble to the Treaty of London, signed in August of the prior year.

The preamble to the Treaty states that James’s ascension to the English and Irish crowns gets rid of the causes of dissension between the powers of Britain and Spain which had led to war amongst the predecessors of Philip III and James I.<sup>48</sup> Bacon, by contrast, says that Elizabeth had

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marriage, with most blessed and happie fruite of marriage; a vertuous and most christian desire of peace, with a fortunate inclination in your neighbour Princes thereunto; So likewise in these intellectuall matters, there seemeth to be no lesse contention betwene the excellencie of your Majesties gifts of Nature, and the vniuersalitie and perfection of your learning.”

<sup>46</sup> *Advancement of Learning* (1605), Book II, *OFB* IV, p. 181, ll. 23-24; *SEH* III, p. 477.

<sup>47</sup> *Advancement of Learning*, Book I, *SEH* III, pp. 306-307; *OFB* IV, p. 42, line 29 to p. 43, line 20: “But for a Tablet or picture of smaller volume (not presuming to speake of your Majestie that liueth,) in my iudgment the most excellent, is that of Queene *Elizabeth*, your immediate Predecessor in this part of *Brittaine*; a Prince, that if *Plutarch* were now aliue to write lyves by parallells, would trouble him I thinke, to find for her a parallell amongst women. This Ladie was endued with learning in her sexe singuler; and rare euen amongst masculine Princes: whether we speake of Learning, of Language, or of science, modern, or ancient: Diuinitie or Humanitie. And vnto the verie last yeare of her life she accustomed to appoint set houres for reading, scarcely any young Student in an Vniuersitie, more dayly, or more dully. As for her gouernement, I assure my selfe, I shall not exceed, if I doe affirme that this part of the Iland, neuer had 45. yeres of better times; and yet not through the calmnesse of the season; but through the wisdom of her regiment. For if there be considered of the one side, the truth of Religion established; the constant peace and securitie; the good administration of Iustice; the temperate vse of the prerogatiue, not slackened, nor much strayned: the flourishing state of Learning, sortable to so excellent a Patronesse; the conuenient estate of wealth and meanes, both of Crowne and subiect; the habite of obedience, and the moderation of discontents: and there be considered on the other side, the differences of Religion, the troubles of Neighbour Countreys, the ambition of *Spaine*, and opposition of *Rome*; and then, that shee was solitary, and of her selfe: these things I say considered: as I could not haue chosen an instance so recent and so proper: so, I suppose, I could not haue chosen one more remarqueable, or eminent, to the purpose nowe in hand; which is concerning the coniunction of learning in the Prince, with felicitie in the people.”

<sup>48</sup> Preamble of the Treaty of London (1604), in *Coleccion de los tratados de paz de España. Reynado de Phelipe III. Parte I*, ed. D. J. A. de Abreu y Bertodano (Madrid, 1740), pp. 243-244: “Deuolutis enim per ipsius Dei maximi gratiam, ad extirpanda discordiarum semina, Angliæ et Hiberniæ Regnis, ad Serenissimum Jacobum Scotiæ Regem, sublatisque ideo illis dissensionum causis, quæ bella inter antecessores Serenissimorum Principum Philippi tertij Hispaniarum Regis, & Alberti ac Isabellæ Claræ Eugeniæ Austriæ Archiducum Ducum Burgundiæ Serenissimi

kept the peace and kept it well—the causes of conflict were not removed by James’s ascension because these causes were not in the person of the English monarch. In other words, where the Treaty’s preamble places the blame for the Armada Wars upon Elizabeth’s reign, Bacon contradicts this directly. The thrust of Bacon’s comparison is subtle but openly accessible to any person that knew the Treaty and its language well: Where the Armada Wars of the 1580s and 90s were cotemporal with “constant peace and securitie”, the Treaty of London that ended them is rooted in mere and meagre desire.<sup>49</sup>

In matters of peace, Bacon knew how to keep his peace, in no small part by keeping his silence, yet he indicated his opinions on the Treaty of London by his silences and his subtly couched contradictions of the terms of the treaty.<sup>50</sup> As we have seen, Bacon maintained his view of peace from some of his earliest writings (*Certain Observations upon a Libel*) up through his valedictory exhortations to war with Spain at the end of his life. Before concluding, let us briefly look at Bacon’s view of leagues and treaties (*foedera*) to which his view of peace is conjoined.

In the voice of his masque characters, Bacon made an early dispraise of leagues in *Tribuit, or giuinge that which is due*, when discussing Elizabeth’s venture of restoring the Reformed religion in England. “Was shee encouraged thereto by the strenght<sup>51</sup> shee found in leagues & alliances with great & potente Confederates? Noe, but shee found her realme in warrs with her neerest and mightiest neighbours.”<sup>52</sup> Leagues and alliances, the young Bacon warned in his masque, can easily be abrogated. Indeed, at the entry of her reign, Bacon presents Queen

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Jacobi Regis Angliae, Scotiae, Franciae et Hiberniae fidei deffensoris &c. tandiu aluerunt.” Contemporary English translation from *A Generall Collection of Treatys*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., (London, 1732), vol. II, p. 131: “For by the Grace of the Omnipotent God, the Kingdoms of *England* and *Ireland* devolving, for extirpating the Seeds of Discord, upon the most serene Prince, *James* King of *Scotland*, and consequently those Causes of Dissension remov’d, which so long fomented and nourish’d War, between the Predecessors of the most serene Princes *Philip* the III. King of *Spain*, and *Albert* and *Isabella Clara Eugenia* Archduke and Archduchess of *Austria*, Duke and Dutchess of *Burgundy*, &c. and of the said King *James*”. Cf. Hume, *History of England*, vol. V, ch. xlv, p. 23: “In the conferences, previous to this treaty, the nations were found to have so few claims on each other, that, except on account of the support given by England to the Low-Country provinces, the war might appear to have been continued more on account of personal animosity between Philip and Elizabeth, than any contrariety of political interests between their subjects.”

<sup>49</sup> *AL* I in *OFB* IV, p. 43, lines 8-9; *SEH* III, pp. 307.

<sup>50</sup> *AL* II, *SEH* III, pp. 474-475, *OFB* IV, p. 179, ll. 30-36: “wherefore, considering that I write to a king that is a maister of this Science, and is so wel assisted, I thinke it decent to passe ouer this part in silence, as willing to obtaine the certificate, which one of the ancient Philosophers aspired vnto, who being silent, when others contended to make demonstration of their abilities by speech, desired it mought be certified for his part, *that there was one that knewe how to hold his peace*.” On this passage see W. Krohn, *Francis Bacon*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Munich, 2006 [1987]), p. 169.

<sup>51</sup> “strenght” is the spelling as given in *OFB* I, p. 267, ll. 613-616.

<sup>52</sup> *Tribuit, or giuinge that which is due*, in *OFB* I, p. 267, ll. 613-616. *LL* I, pp. 126-127.

Elizabeth as in league with Spain alone: “Shee stood single and alone in league onely with one that, after the people of her nacion had made his warrs, lefte her to make her owne peace; one that could never be by anye sollicitacion moved to renewe the treaties; and one that hath since proceeded from doubtfull terms of amitye to the highest actes of hostilitie.”<sup>53</sup> Taking the words of his characters out of their mouths, Bacon repeats this charge against Spain a short time later, *in propria persona*, in his *Certaine obseruations upon a libell*.<sup>54</sup> From the early 1590s onwards, Bacon was insisting that treaties and leagues fail to keep the peace.<sup>55</sup>

Indeed, Bacon had the audacity to press his insistence on this matter to Robert Cecil directly, in a text mutually dedicated to the University of Cambridge and to the Earl of Salisbury both in his capacity as the University’s Chancellor and as Lord Treasurer, the *De Sapientia Veterum*. In that work, after pleading with his dedicatee to give the work the protection of the Cecil and Salisbury name,<sup>56</sup> Bacon would stress in a fable on *foedera* that only those treaties backed by the force of necessity (the force of one party having the overwhelming power of forcing the other to comply) could be reliably enforced (to the advantage of the stronger party)—in short, in this fable, Bacon stressed the efficacy of his understanding of peace and the inefficacy of any attempts to make

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<sup>53</sup> *Tribuit*, in *OFB* I, p. 267, ll. 616-620; *LL* I, pp. 126-127. Compare Stewart’s *Commentary*, *OFB* I, p. 808, which identifies Elizabeth’s ally in this passage as Philip II’s Spain.

<sup>54</sup> *Certaine Obseruations vpon a libell*, in *LL* I, p. 190; *OFB* I, p. 392, ll. 1461-1472: “After *Queen Maries* death the king of *Spaine* thinkinge himself discharged of *that* difficultie though in honour he was no lesse bound to stand to it then before, renewed the like treatie wherin her *Maiestie* concurred....But it was discovered indeed that the kinges meaninge was after some ceremonies and perfunctorie insistinge thervpon to growe a parte to a peace with *the french* excludinge her *Maiestie* and so to leave her to make her owne peace, after her people had made his warres.”

<sup>55</sup> This may mark a departure from the view expressed in the *Notes on the Present State of Christendom*, often attributed to either Anthony or Francis Bacon. The author of the *Notes on the Present State of Christendom* praised the French Duke of Anjou (a candidate for marriage with Queen Elizabeth I) as being “grown to good experience, readiness, and judgment, the better thereby able to guide and govern his affairs, both in practice, in treaty, and action.” See *LL* I, “Notes on the Present State of Christendom,” pp. 18-30, at p. 27.

<sup>56</sup> *De Sapientia Veterum*, *SEH* VI, p. 620: “eique praesidium nominis tui imperties.” In his classic study of the *De Sapientia Veterum*, Charles Lemmi makes no mention in the entirety of his study of the work’s addressee and dedicatee, Robert Cecil, thus ignoring the immediate Jacobean political context of the work. This is of a piece with Lemmi’s cursory treatment of the myths of Styx and Perseus, and his omission of any mention of the Treaty of London. See C. W. Lemmi, *The Classic Deities in Bacon: A Study in Mythological Symbolism* (Baltimore, 1933), esp. pp. 185-186. On the broader literary context and reception history of Bacon’s *De Sapientia Veterum* see A-M. Hartmann, “‘A little work of mine that hath begun to pass the world’: the Italian translation of Francis Bacon’s *De sapientia*,” *Transactions of the Cambridge Bibliographical Society* XIV/3 (2010), pp. 203-217; A-M. Hartmann, *English Mythography in its European Context 1500-1650* (Oxford, 2018), pp. 135-161; J-P. Cavallé, “Introduction” in F. Bacon, *La sagesse des anciens* (Paris, 1997), pp. 11-52.

peace with paper signatures.<sup>57</sup> Applied to Bacon's direct addressee, the fable is a direct assault upon the Treaty of London, levelled at its principal negotiator.

In an early aside in the *Certaine obseruations upon a libell* Bacon had noted that while treaties without a higher arbiter might have no bearing on securing lasting peace (deploying the example of Philip II's cunning departure from treaties he had ratified to press the point), Bacon also noted that treaties can lull at least one of the parties into a false sense of security in thinking that as it honors the terms so its fellow parties will do likewise.<sup>58</sup> Bacon drops this caveat in his later published presentations of treaties, perhaps because he altered his view or perhaps precisely because he hadn't: perhaps it would be going too far to say explicitly that he regarded the Treaty of London as lulling James I and his leading ministers into a false feeling of security that as they fulfilled their Treaty obligations, Spain would do so as well.<sup>59</sup>

In closing, let us look at one last example of Bacon on treaties and making nominal peace with one's enemies—in this case, drawn from Bacon's natural histories and biological writings on aging.

Bacon did not omit his politics from his science. His critique of making peace through treaties is visible no less in his biological writings on mortality, his natural history of life and death of 1623. Bacon, in his scientific writings on human aging and the prolongation of life was confident that one could grow old and blind without growing senile and mentally soft. As an example of this, in the *Historia vitae*, Bacon took up the case of Appius Cæcus, Appius the

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<sup>57</sup> *De Sapientia Veterum*, SEH VI, pp. 633-634. For a sharply contrasting interpretation, which makes no mention of Cecil or the Treaty of London, Tom van Malssen reads Bacon's fable of Styx as a philosophic allegory in dialogue with the myth the Fall and salvation: "We call to mind what Bacon must have called to mind when he wrote the fable on treaties, namely that after man's first parents had broken the 'treaty' that had been imposed on them, the Majesty of Heaven in His mercy sent His Son to hold out to the 'penitent' the prospect of being allowed access to the 'banquet' of the elect one day." T. van Malssen, *The Political Philosophy of Francis Bacon: On the Unity of Knowledge* (Albany, New York, 2015), p. 70. That Bacon "must" have thought about the myth of salvation when composing his fable on *foedera* is nowhere evident—much closer to hand are Bacon's direct addressee (Cecil) and the most significant international treaty binding Britain at the time of the work's publication (the Treaty of London of 1604).

<sup>58</sup> *OFB* I, p. 393, ll. 1493-1504; *LL* I, p. 191.

<sup>59</sup> On Bacon's view of treaties as lulling one party into a self-delusive sense of security, compare Bacon's "Notes of a Speech concerning a War with Spain", which Spedding dates to March 1623/4, where Bacon writes that "all will advise the King not to entertain further a treaty wherein he hath been so manifestly and so long deluded." *LL* VII, "Notes of a Speech concerning a War with Spain", pp. 460-465, at p. 460.



Blind, a Roman censor (and literary character in Cicero's *Pro Caelio*), who, on Bacon's telling, lived to an age of innumerable years, most of which he passed after the light of his orbed eyes had gone out. Still, Bacon relates, Appius did not let his blindness make him soft: he governed his family, his many clients, and the Roman republic itself forcefully. As an example of this forceful rule, Bacon presents Appius borne into the Senate upon a litter to speak against the conclusion of a treaty of peace with Pyrrhus, King of Epirus, a sworn enemy to the Roman state. "With great impatience, Senators," Bacon reports Appius imploring to his colleagues, "I have borne my blindness for many years now; but now for me it would be better for me to be deaf as well, when I hear you agitating such deformed counsels."<sup>60</sup> The thrust of Bacon's Roman storytelling is that those who are old and blind can govern forcefully and well, but such good governors would rather be deaf than hear talk of treaty-making with mortal enemies.

While the ostensible point of Bacon's Roman narration, conveyed in a natural history of mortality, is to show that one can grow old without losing mental sharpness, Bacon's politics are not wholly absent from the account. The former Lord Chancellor and statesman, now banished from court, can perhaps assert with greater safety in a Latinate scientific treatise that the firm of mind don't counsel treaties with enemies than he could do in government or when writing in English. In other words, for Bacon, in his scientific writings, it is a mark of mental strength that one refuses to make leagues or treaties of peace with those who wish one's destruction.

### *Conclusion*

The sum of the argument advanced here is that, for Bacon, peace is the incapacity of a state to be harmed militarily by any other opposed state, *even if* that state desired to inflict harm. This

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<sup>60</sup> *SEH* II, pp. 144-145; *OFB* XII, p. 214, ll. 15-24, *Historia vitae & mortis* (1623): "Appium Cæcum, Annosissimum fuisse constat; Annos non numerant; quorum partem maiorem, postquam Luminibus orbatus esset, transegit; Neque propterea mollitus, Familiam numerosam, Clientelas quam plurimas, quinetiam Remp.[ublicam] fortissimè rexit; Extremâ vero Ætate Lecticâ in Senatum delatus, Pacem cum Pyrrho vehementissimè dissuasit; cuius Principium Orationis admodum memorabile, & inuincibile quoddam Robur, et impetum Animi spirans. *Magnâ*, inquit, *impatientiâ (patres conscripti) Cæcitate meam, per plures iam Annos tuli; at nunc etiam me Surdum quoque optauerim, cum vos tam deformia Consilia agitare audiam.*" [tr. Appius Caecus is held to have been most aged; his years are not numbered, the greater part of which he passed after the lights of his eyes had gone out; nor on that account was he soft, a numerous family, numerous clients, and the republic as well he ruled forcefully. At a truly extreme age he was borne into the Senate on a litter, he most vehemently dissuaded concluding peace with Pyrrhus, the opening of which is so memorable, suspiring with both an invincible strength and impetuosity of mind: *With great impatience, Senators*, he said, *I have borne my blindness for many years now; but now for me it would be better for me to be deaf as well, when I hear you agitating such deformed counsels.*"]

inflects his foreign policy and his opposition to the 1604 Treaty of London. This article concludes with a thought about international relations theory, emphasizing that how we conceptualize peace is correspondingly crucial to how we conceptualize and study war in international politics. How we think about peace shapes how we think about war. Our notions of peace shape what we are willing to concede at the bargaining table, how we might view treaties, how to think about diplomacy, embassies, and negotiations—and also what we might not concede and where states might make recourse to arms. By now, I hope that I may have shown that the definition of peace as not-war is not and has not been eternal in the history of state theory and the history of the theory of international relations, that Francis Bacon offers an historically interesting counter-conceptualization of what peace was or is or might be, and that both Bacon's thought and the notion of peace in international relations merit the study accorded it here.