
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.47960/2303-7431.26.2021.37>

UDK: 949.713:32“04/14“
27(091)

Original scientific paper

Received on November 4, 2021

Accepted on December 5, 2021

ZDRAVKO PERIĆ – MATE BUNTIĆ

Josip Juraj Strossmayer University of Osijek, Faculty of Humanities
and Social Sciences – University of Mostar , Faculty of Humanities
and Social Sciences

zperic@ffos.hr – mate.buntic@ff.sum.ba

HOW BLUE BLOOD BECAME RED

Abstract

This paper discusses the medieval theological and political history, and the difference between blue and red blood. The popular phrase *blue blood* had a special significance during the Middle Ages, and its echo has been present in our culture ever since. One might think that such an abstract concept is only an insignificant legend that emerged from the oral folk tradition without any roots in theory and literature. The author's intention is to present the concept of blue and red blood as a part of fictional genre theory. The fictional genre discourse becomes especially evident when the king's simultaneously natural and supernatural bodies, or more simply, the notion that the king possesses a superbody, are discussed. In the given period the concept of *blue blood*, which referred to the king's dignity, was coined. Thomas Hobbes, in his famous work *Leviathan*, develops the social contract theory, which is used to explain the development of the modern political community. *Blue blood* becomes red when an ordinary citizen becomes involved in politics, as this paper confirms.

Keywords: *blue blood; red blood; persona mixta; gemini persona; kingship; metaphor; political theology*

Introduction

Before we start to develop specific ideas, it would be beneficial to remind ourselves about the paper *Nobility in the Nicomachean Ethics* by Roger Crisp. He reminded us of Aristotle's understanding of the notion of nobility. Crisp is surprised with how little discussion is dedicated in contemporary period to the notion of nobility (τὸ καλόν), which is relevant for understanding the ethics of happiness and virtue.¹ According to Crisp, this notion denotes important characteristics of a virtuous person.² As opposed to the idea of nobility discussed by Crisp, we will focus on the unexplored concept of nobility regarding blue blood. The development of the idea of nobility can be found in the book *William Rufus* by Frank Barlow, who wrote, in chapter 4, about the relationship between the upper class and the monarchy in England.³ We will approach the topic of nobility from a different perspective which describes the concept of blue and red blood. This concept emerged in the political and theological framework of the Middle Ages. The discussion on the significance of history concerning the issue of blood and the general significance of blood is not a mere anachronistic topic. Nowadays, when we witness blood flowing freely around us on the streets, in cities and states, we are forced to ask ourselves the following: what did blood once represent, and what does it represent today? The prominent contemporary authors who write and actualize the issue of blood are: Gil Anidjar, Bettina M. Bildhauer, David Biale, Caroline Walker Bynum etc. In one of his essays, Anidjar writes:

There is no doubt a universal dimension to blood. Yet, like many universals, this one has been produced and extended to those who would never have thought of bringing together for themselves blood and commu-

¹ Cf. ROGER CRISP, "Nobility in the Nicomachean Ethics", *Phronesis*, 59 (2014) 3, p. 231.

² Cf. *Ibid.*, p. 233.

³ Cf. FRANK BARLOW, *William Rufus*, Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 1983, p. 156.

nity, blood *as* community. It was a (slowly developing) Christian idea all along. And it has become a commonplace of anthropology, a discourse and discipline that is still fighting with Christian inheritance (“systems of consanguinity,” “blood and belief”).⁴

What Anidjar claims on the universality of blood precedes the medieval topic of blue blood that had gradually developed in medieval Christianity. Since the Middle Ages, huge social differences existed between the pope, clergy, kings, princes, and knights on one side and common citizens on the other. Granted, the former were superior to the latter. For this reason, common citizens did not feature as a topic of discussion in the works of famous philosophers, and legal and political relationships existed only between the pope and the kings. If we wish to understand the key notion of this paper, that is, “how blue blood became red”, it is important to explore the complex legal and political relations that had existed between the abovementioned, opposing parties. Their dispute revolved around the issue of who has the authority to rule the kingdom. On the one hand, the popes claimed to be the lawful successors of Jesus Christ on Earth. The kings, on the other hand, exacted their rights based on the hereditary principle, which they considered to be irrevocable. Finally, both sides wanted to gain advantage from sovereignty, and had used it only to fulfill their own interests. Ernst Kantorowicz, in his book *The King’s Two Bodies*, explains the ambiguity present in the meaning of the term *Sainthood*. The concept of two bodies, in the theological and political sense, developed from the Christian and religious explanation of Christ and his Mystical Body. In this paper, the notion of the body that developed from the medieval metaphor is considered. *Blue blood*, in addition to other concepts, can be extracted from this metaphor. In the past, people used to say that the aristocracy and their family members are *bluebloods*. Now, one might ask how their blood became blue, in contrast to ordinary citizens whose blood is red. If we explore the emergence and the meaning of certain medieval fictional metaphors,

⁴ GIL ANIDJAR, “Universal Blood,” in: *Blood, Reflections on What Unites and Divides Us*, Anthony Bale and David Feldman (ed.), London 2015, p. 51-52.

we can notice that the term *blue blood* originates from political and historical fiction. In accordance with this, G. Anidjar touches upon the issue of blue blood in his book *Blood: A Critique of Christianity*.⁵

As long as we deal with the notion of body – for instance, the mystical body, natural body, sublime body etc. – we can discuss the blood, which is its vital constituent. In other words, blood is an essential part of our bodies and the body cannot function without it. In line with this view, we can attribute certain supernatural features and prerogatives to our bodies. In the same way, human blood can be interpreted in terms of blue color. Blue blood was a sign of nobility in the past, and it made a difference between aristocracy and common citizens. Blue blood, in its everyday meaning, became a trademark of aristocracy in the majority of European countries. The aristocrats were proud of their blue blood, which distinguished them from common citizens who had the ordinary, red-colored blood. It is a well-known fact that the blue blood of Spanish knights (*sangre azul*) was a means of distinction between them and the common people, as well as the dark-skinned Moors. In order to comprehend better the manner in which the English kings and knights perceived the human body, we should take into consideration Shakespeare's *King Richard II*. The tragedy shows how the king in question creates a spiritual image of himself and attributes special features to his body. Apart from questioning whether such a picture of himself is an objective one, one might ask how is that possible. The answer to these questions can be found at the end of Shakespeare's play.

Within the scope of modern philosophy, which clearly distinguishes between theology and politics, philosophers are more concerned with secular questions. Such an approach marks a new beginning of rational understanding of the human being, state, and sovereignty. In this paper, apart from discussing the prerogatives of the body, we wish to present the historical concept of blue blood and how it became red. In his *Leviathan*, Hobbes describes this kind of transition in parallel with the emergence of the citizen and the modern state.

⁵ Cf. GIL ANIDJAR, *Blood: A Critique of Christianity*, Columbia University Press, New York, 2014, p. 167.

A View on the Medieval Man

Let us begin by considering medieval men. Their life ideals require a retrospective approach in terms of not only their worldly life but also regarding their religious life. These two vital ideals intertwined in the bodily. It is almost impossible to reasonably discuss a medieval man separately from religion. In the Middle Ages, it was believed that God created common people to till the land and to procure by trading the commodities necessary to permanently sustain life. Furthermore, He created the clergy for religious tasks, and the nobility to encourage virtue and lead the people by means of justice, so that the deeds and morals of these fine people might serve a pattern for others. As such, the emerging image of brave and noble knights probably resonated to a much larger extent among modern individuals than among medieval people. The life of knights has often been described in an idyllic manner. If we look at that way of life with a sober sense of reality, our perception of such lofty chivalry seems unnecessary or even comedic, a humorous anachronism as depicted in Cervantes' *Don Quixote*. Johan Huizinga described the idyllic life of medieval men as follows: "Weary of the complicated formalism of chivalrous love, the aristocratic soul renounces the overstrung pretension of heroism in love, and praises rural life as the escape from it"⁶.

The requirements of moral, aesthetic, and social perfection weighed too heavily on the knights. Therefore, the medieval literature inherited from classical authors the topic of praising simple life, and mastered the notion that the pastoral life embodies a carefree naturalness of love. In fact, that was one side of the ideal life of the ordinary medieval man. However, in contrast to the average life of the individual, the Middle Ages are distinguished by other characteristics. The legal and political developments, especially those between the king and the pope, had a far-reaching significance: "Sovereignty was initially asserted by kings

⁶ JOHAN HUIZINGA, *The Waning of the Middle Ages*, Penguin Books, London, 1976, p. 124.

against medieval popes and emperors, and against rival monarchs and other independence-minded rulers”⁷.

Here, one must be careful when discussing sovereignty in the Middle Ages. While analyzing political institutions and concepts characteristic of medieval European countries, it is evident that there was no political rule in the sense of the modern nation-state, nor did the people participate in political rule in the modern sense of the word. The primal, European formula is legitimized through the idea that God is sovereign, and that the law, *lex*, which is always good in terms of age-old customs, is also sovereign, so sovereign that it could contradict God. This does not mean that in the Middle Ages there was ultimately no tolerance between kings and popes. Brian Tierney states that the ideas of the fifteenth century conciliarists did not die away altogether; rather, they had a continuing afterlife, and can be found in the writings on secular constitutional theory. Namely, “a great volume of theoretical writing appeared asserting that ultimate authority in the church resided in the whole community, that a general council representing the community could depose an unjust ruler, even a pope, that the best form of government for the church was some form of mixed constitution”⁸.

From all of the above, we can observe a distinct political theology, in which it is important to take into account literary genre features such as abstractions, fictions, and bodies. These features are integral to Kantorowicz’s argument concerning the theology of kingship, developed by the Elizabethan lawyers. As Victoria Kahn writes, “in Kantorowicz’s argument, we could say, political theology is preoccupied by poiesis”⁹.

However, Kantorowicz’s analysis in addition presents political theology as a poetic and legal fiction. In his book *The King’s Two Bodies*, he follows the appropriation of theological metaphors, above all the ecclesiastical body of the Church and the incarnate body of Christ, for secular political purposes, showing their distinctive use by English common

⁷ ROBERT JACKSON, *Sovereignty*, Polity Press, Cambridge 2007, p. 8.

⁸ BRIAN TIERNNEY, *Religion, law, and the growth of constitutional thought 1150-1650*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1982, p. 2.

⁹ VICTORIA KAHN, *The Future of Illusion: Political Theology and Early Modern Texts*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, 2014, p. 55.

lawyers for the crown. In Kantorowicz's exploration of "The King's Two bodies," he analyses the concept of kingship, but does not discuss the concept of blood. Also, the topic of blood is not mentioned in his discussion on the body and mystical bodies. In the opinion of many contemporary authors, the topic of nobility necessarily implies the topic of blood in addition to that of the body. If we were to ask what nobility is, the following answer can be given: "Nobility too could be invented as a social category grounded in blood as genealogy or lineage, along with others"¹⁰.

In medieval theology, a specific issue as to whether a licit government could exist among the infidels emerged from the relationship between ecclesial and secular authority. The conciliators, who advocated tolerance between the popes and kings, presented the theory of limited monarchy in such a way that enabled it to become classical. Usually, the advanced ideas of the said structure were used in construction theories of the state.¹¹ The failure of the conciliar movement, either to restrain the pope permanently, or to instigate the growth of federalism in the Church, contributed to the justification of both the Reformation and ultramontanism. If one considers ultramontanism, there must have been certain political thought "grounds for absolute monarchy, either in the nature of political society, or in the condition of the Christian Church, for the Papal monarchy to triumph in such an overwhelming fashion over a movement so reasonable and respectable, and supported by men of such learning and zeal"¹². There was a prolonged debate as to whether popes or kings possess the authority of God. The failure of the conciliar movement marked the beginning of the modern world. In studying the history of constitutional ideas, we explore the various ways in which power can be legitimized and ordered so as to maintain its legitimacy. Some kings attributed consanguinity to a mystical, seven-sacrament power that conferred absolute legitimacy based on hereditary

¹⁰ G. ANIDJAR, *Blood: A Critique of Christianity*, p. 58.

¹¹ Cf. B. TIERRNEY, *op. cit.*, p. 3.

¹² JOHN NEVILLE FIGGIS, *Political Thought from Gerson to Grotius: 1414–1625: Seven Studies*, Batoche Books, Kitchener, 1999, p. 29.

succession and unified the realm in the person of the king. Hereditary succession was, in some kings' view, the inviolable principle of divine right and the incarnation of sacred kingship.¹³ The legal political idea of *blue blood* evolved from this claim of hereditary succession.

The Conceptualization of Kingship

From that basis, we begin to understand political theology as a forming fiction, whose strength comes not from the genealogy of the state, but instead from the persuasive force of theological metaphors. Theological metaphors persist in the modern age not because they are structurally necessary, but because theological metaphors, like all fictions, serve strategic ends. As an example, which confirms this claim, we can point to one of the debates about fiction in Hobbes's philosophy, in which Quentin Skinner and David Runciman exchanged views. In his work, Robin Douglass writes about the meaning of fiction of Hobbes's version of body politic, showing the importance of understanding Hobbes's notion of *state*. According to Douglass, the two previously mentioned authors, in the debate, focused mainly on Hobbes's *Leviathan*: "However, as Skinner's and Runciman's analyses are focused on representation and the person of the state, they have no recourse to Hobbes's earlier works, since the theory of authorization and personation was introduced only in *Leviathan*"¹⁴.

Douglass describes fiction as a composition of different conceptions that are present only in the mind, which explains why the image of the sovereign is so authoritative, since the reality of political power is precarious. In his book, Kantorowicz fastidiously traces and explicates the secularization and abstraction of theological concepts and metaphors. Here we see similarities between Hobbes's fiction and medieval theological concepts which are discussed by Kantorowicz. Roughly similar views can be found in the work of Victoria Kahn. In referring to

¹³ Cf. RICHARD C. MCCOY, *Alterations of State: Sacred Kingship in the English Reformation*, Columbia University Press, New York, 2002, p. 88.

¹⁴ ROBIN DOUGLASS, "The Body Politic 'is a fictitious body.'" *Hobbes Studies* 27 (2014), p. 140-141.

Kantorowicz, she says: “Kantorowicz tracks the appropriation of theological metaphors, above all the ecclesiastical body of the Church and the incarnated body of Christ, for secular political purposes, showing their distinctive use by English common lawyers for the crown”¹⁵.

As fictions, theological metaphors satisfy the need for persuasive accounts of the world, and at the same time function as tactical forms that mediate a literal-minded view of politics, which polarized conflicts and produced crises. Imposed rules are of social, cultural, and biological origin, and are the gift of fantasy. In the introduction of his book, Kantorowicz says:

The mystic fiction of the ‘King’s Two Bodies,’ as divulged by English jurists of the Tudor period and the times thereafter, does not form an exception to this rule. It has been mercilessly plucked by Maitland in a highly stimulating and amusing study on ‘The Crown as Corporation.’ With a strong touch of sarcasm and irony, the great English historian of law has disclosed the follies which the fiction of the king as a ‘corporation sole’ could, and did, lead to, and has shown at the same time what havoc the theory of a two-bodied king and twinned kingship was bound to work in bureaucratic logic.¹⁶

Certain people solve the problem of the separation of reality from fiction by being intent on ignoring it. For many, the true meaning of reality is unknown. What are we left with is an attempt to build a logically assumed structure: “Wittily Maitland puns about the king being ‘personified’ and styles the theory of the King’s Two Bodies ‘a marvelous display of metaphysical – or we might say metaphysical-nonsense’”¹⁷.

The concept of “The King’s Two Bodies,” can be briefly described as a thematization of the king’s supernatural and natural bodies, or more simply, the notion that the king possesses a superbody. It is an abstract physiological fiction that considers the notion of person. Also, *The King’s Two Bodies* sketches a history of representation in the political sphere,

¹⁵ V. KAHN, *op. cit.*, p. 57–58.

¹⁶ ERNST H. KANTOROWICZ, *The King’s Two Bodies: A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology*, Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 1997, p. 3.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

in which the relationship of the person and the office plays a crucial role.¹⁸ In fact, it is a legal political concept, which infuses the topic of the king-person in various political events. Upon his demise (not necessarily his death), the king's soul migrates into the body of his successor. Such continuity is as familiar as the phrase "The king is dead. Long live the king". The great English jurist Edward Coke cunningly observes that the mortal king was God-made, but that the immortal king was man-made. This paradox considers the notion of person from a political and legal viewpoint. It is important to emphasize Kantorowicz's understanding of the juristic person that is the main element in understanding his idea of political theology. In his work *The Two Faces of Personhood: Hobbes Corporate Agency, and the Personality of the State*, Sean Fleming reminds us about the duality of persona, which is similar to Kantorowicz's discussion of the medieval meaning of persona. In discussing artificial persons, Fleming claims: "The distinction between representative persons and represented persons becomes crucial when we consider artificial persons (...) True artificial persons are those that are simultaneously natural persons: on the representative side, lawyers and estate agents; on the represented side, their clients"¹⁹. Before we move on to the next chapter, it would be instructive to briefly address the paper *Conscience and the Concealments of Metaphor in Hobbes's "Leviathan"* by Karen S. Feldman. In her work, she describes the potential dangers of metaphors in Hobbes's works, especially in *Leviathan*. As an example of these dangers, she discusses the notion of conscience: "Thus, with the metaphorical use of the word conscience to mean private judgement, private reason, and private thought, the nature of knowledge is taken out of the sphere of true witnesses and rendered corruptible"²⁰. In that sense, we have to keep in mind the significance and dangers of metaphors which appear in the rest of the work.

¹⁸ Cf. V. KAHN, *op. cit.*, p. 62.

¹⁹ SEAN FLEMING, "The two faces of personhood: Hobbes, corporate agency, and the personality of the state", *European Journal of Political Theory*, 0 (2017), 0, p. 10.

²⁰ KAREN S. FELDMAN, "Conscience and the Concealments of Metaphor in Hobbes's 'Leviathan'", *Philosophy & Rhetoric*, 34 (2001) 1, p. 26.

The Metaphorical Person

Whenever we discuss the concept of person, it seems as if one is always dealing with a secret that conceals its true inner self. Our intention is not to show the etymological origin of “person”. Rather, what concerns us are the different interpretations of “person” in diverse legal and political visions. Interestingly, the medieval theologians strongly emphasize substantiality, but never rationality. One of the most famous definitions of person is certainly M. S. Boetius’ “Persona est naturae rationalis individua substantia.” As such, the person is an individual and a complete being, which possesses intellect. Following such a pronounced individualism, how could the *persona mixta* be contrary to the above definition? The answer to this question might lie in medieval theology. The peculiarity of English history consists in the specific and often independent sequence of the European legal and political history. The same can be said for religious matters: „After conversion, a distinction between priesthood and kingship was made, but this never resulted in a total separation, for the king was still the sacred protector possessing a mixed character. Indicative of this continuation and the difficulty with which the distinction between English priesthood and kingship was made, is the fact that two separate court systems, one ecclesiastical and one royal, were not established until well after the Norman conquest”²¹.

Historians usually agree that the conversion of Europe to Christianity occurred in stages, with kings and warriors leading the way. England was no exception: “Even after the conquest, the distinction between *regnum* and *sacerdotium* was never finalized. It has been rightly asserted that the relationship between kingship and priesthood is the dominant problem of medieval political thought”²².

In citing “Christ as the center of kingship” in the chapter on “The Norman Anonymous”, Kantorovicz is able to refer to the fact of England’s Christian history. He sought to show that the rule of political fiction was

²¹ MALCOLM B. YARNELL III, *Royal Priesthood in the English Reformation*, Oxford University Press, New York, 2013, p. 43.

²² Ibid.

not created by itself, but it is grounded in theological thought: “While undoubtedly it is true that the legal fiction of the King’s Two Bodies was a distinctive feature of English political thought in the age of Elizabeth and the early Stuarts, it would be unfortunate to imply that those speculations were restricted to the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries or were lacking antecedents”²³.

For us, *persona mixta* is an important term in the religious political sphere, where it mainly represents the bishop and the king, and where *mixture* refers to the merging of spiritual and secular powers in one person. Such discourse is similar to Hobbes’s discussion of body politic, especially his XVI chapter, *Of Persons, Authors, and Things Personated*. It is reasonable to assume that Hobbes was aware of these medieval theological terms. In discussing the unification of multitude of people into one person, he states: “A multitude of men are made one person, when they are by one man, or one person, represented so that it be done with the consent of every one of that multitude in particular”²⁴. We want to show that the expression of *persona mixta* might be helpful for understanding Hobbes’s discussion of unity in Leviathan’s commonwealth political body. The research of Hobbes’s body politic allows us to understand the influence of theological doctrine of medieval ideas on political ideas of the 17th century, which are largely present in Hobbes’s work. If we focus on previous theological ideas, it is necessary to point out the purposefulness of the notion of *persona mixta*. In addition to the bishop, the king appeared as a *persona mixta*, because he was consecrated and anointed due to certain spiritual abilities. This explanation is supported by the fact that Christ was understood as both the priest and the king. These dual powers, each divine in origin, were mutually submissive. In spiritual matters, kings were to submit to the priesthood, and in secular matters, priests were to submit to kings. Kantorovicz shows that the king’s spiritual character stems from the clericalization of royal duties. Thereby, he quotes the Norman anonymous: “The power of the

²³ E. H. KANTOROWICZ, *op. cit.*, p. 42.

²⁴ THOMAS HOBBS, *Leviathan*, Hackett Publishing Company, Indianapolis and Cambridge, 1994, p. 104.

king is the power of God. This power, namely, is God's by nature, and the king's by grace. Hence, the king, too, is God and Christ, but by grace; and whatsoever he does, he does not simply as a man, but as one who has become God and Christ by grace"²⁵.

The king's power is of divine origin, it represents both God by grace, and the office *in officio figura et imago Christyi et Dei est*. Here, the emphasis is on the office. Only while the king acts in officio, is he pictured and imaged as heavenly anointed. This bipolar meaning created the *gemini persona*, another fictitious royal person. This term forms the fictional double royal creature who anointed by God's grace: "The expression itself, *gemini persona*, does not represent a poetical metaphor, but is a technical term derived from and related to christological definitions. That actually this term was rarely applied to Christ is a different matter"²⁶.

Kantorowicz wanted to show that his reference to the Norman anonymous bears a significance in the philosophical peculiarities that support and constitute his theory, and the fact that the duplication of royal figures is not based on law nor on constitution, but on theology. Here, it is possible to point to the royal personification of Christ on earth. What prevents Kantorowicz to speculate on blood or mystical blood as he speculates on the body? Perhaps the answer to this question can be found in Anidjar's work: "Blood never becomes a political concept, nor one of the foundations of modern political thought, yet its universality – its rule – is hardly diminished thereby"²⁷. Whether this allegation as a basis for the universality of blood is an argument as to why Kantorowicz does not discuss the issue blood, it is hard to say. He writes about kinship. In that sense, the relation between blood and kinship would be purposeful.

For the Norman anonymous, the king was the absolute personification of Christ on earth. Seeing the king as a double personality is ontological, but at the same time, liturgical due to what happens at the altar:

²⁵ E. H. KANTOROWICZ, *op. cit.*, p. 48.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

²⁷ G. ANIDJAR, *Blood: A Critique of Christianity*, p. 85.

„The ideas of the Norman Anonymous, therefore found no resonance in either the ecclesiastical or the secular camps. His image of rulership was unacceptable to the hierarchy and was it no longer was of major interest to the secular state. Hence, despite the modernism of his dialectical and antithetical method, the pattern of Christ-centered kingship for which he fought belonged to the past“²⁸.

Regardless of the Norman anonymous, Kantorowicz refers to the importance of the story of the appropriation of theological concepts for political purposes. He outlines the history of representation in the political sphere, in which the relationship of person and the office has a crucial role. He argues that the Roman-canon juristic person is compatible with the legal notion of a corporation. This, in turn, means that he sees the juridical person or corporation as an enabling fiction rather than a real being. This legal corporate political thought will have an important impact on the modern theory of the state. Here, we can refer to the king's feature that is corporate in nature.

Traces of Political Thought in Shakespeare

In many ways, the political and legal discourse that Shakespeare left behind is instructive and can significantly contribute to understanding the political rule of medieval history. One can extract important legal and political issues from some of his works, primarily from *Hamlet*, *Othello* and *Richard II*. Here, one can see the dominance of constitutionalist's assumptions in the English common law in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and how such legal constitutionalism is formally expressed in Shakespearean drama. The drama is popularly characterized by its tendency to eschew personified abstractions and present hypothetical and probable narratives involving fictional or historical characters, whereby Shakespeare in some way anticipated and immortalized the metaphor of “The King's Two Bodies”²⁹. Namely, “he has made it not only the symbol, but indeed the very substance and essence of one of his

²⁸ E. H. KANTOROWICZ, *op. cit.*, p. 60.

²⁹ “The King's Two Bodies” is the legal concept upon which Kantorowicz bases his work.

greatest plays: *The Tragedy of King Richard II* is the tragedy of the King's Two Bodies"³⁰.

For Kantorowicz, there is no doubt that Shakespeare, in addition to his poetry, had known the constitutional and legal language which jurists of his time commonly used in court. A dominant part of the concept of "The King's Two Bodies" is the fate of two natures of the two-king being. The tragedy of King Richard begins with his return from Ireland, wherein he does not yet express the separation of the two natures. As he kisses the soil of his kingdom, he famously pronounces the height of his kingship: „Not all the water in the rough rude sea Can wash the balm off from an anointed king; The breath of worldly man cannot depose The deputy elected by the Lord"³¹.

Water, used by ordinary mortals, cannot do anything to an anointed king, and the human beings' inferior breath is incompatible with royal dignity for Richard. These are not genre figures, which form the text stylistically. Confirmation of such allegations can be found in McCoy:

Consanguinity's legal and political preeminence is affirmed in Sir Thomas Craig's *Right of Succession to the Kingdom of England* (1603), which says that 'Rights of Blood...are not subject to Civil bond'. After the Restoration, Stuart apologists would take these claims to even grander heights, maintaining that the crown always descended through 'the sacred channel of birth-right and proximity of blood' and adding that 'this political capacity being of that sublimity,...is no ways subject to any human imbecilities of infamy, crime, or the like, [because] it draweth all imperfections and incapacities whatsoever from that natural body where-with it is consolidate, & (as it were) consubstantiate.'³²

Therefore, with these fictional figures, Shakespeare exhibits the actual doctrine of his time. At the beginning of the scene (III, ii), King Richard is still confident in his royal dignity. Hence: „For every man that Bolingbroke hath press'd To lift shrewd steel against our golden crown,

³⁰ E. H. KANTOROWICZ, *op. cit.*, p. 26.

³¹ WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE, *King Richard II*, ICON Classics, San Diego, 2005, p. 64.

³² R. C. MCCOY, *op. cit.*, p. 89.

God for his Richard hath in heavenly pay A glorious angel: then, if angels fight, Weak men must fall, for heaven still guards the right³³.

The magnificent images of the King's dignity by the grace of God are not permanent. They slowly fade as more bad news arrive. Richard's attitude changes unexpectedly, prompting a metamorphosis from realism to nominalism. Shakespeare shows his familiarity with the philosophical direction of nominalism. Nominalism is likewise present in his play *Romeo and Juliet*. When Juliet asks Romeo: „O Romeo, Romeo! wherefore art thou Romeo? Deny thy father, and refuse thy name. Or, if thou wilt not, be but sworn my love. And I'll no longer be a Capulet [...] What's in a name? That which we call a rose By any other name would smell as sweet³⁴.

Aside from the existent nominalism apparent in Shakespeare's work, there was a secular theory of divine right, which suggests that monarch and other sovereign receive their power immediately from God. This theory had a prominent role in defending the authority of early seventeenth-century kings in both France and England. At the beginning of Hobbes's work, it did not have a significant role, however in *Leviathan* he recognized its political utility and elaborated on it.³⁵

Kantorowicz highlights the “royal dignity,” which is beginning to fall apart in Richard's life. His transcendent reality, his objective truth, and godlike existence, which were so bright, fade to nothing in *nomen*.³⁶ Shakespeare presents King Richard as in semi-reality, a state of amnesia or twilight sleep: „I had forgot myself. Am I not king? Awake, thou coward majesty! thou sleepest. Is not the king's name twenty thousand names? Arm, arm, my name! a puny subject strikes At thy great glory.³⁷

This state of semi-reality, royal forgetfulness, and twilight sleep constitute defamation of the royal character. The fiction of the unity of the double body slowly breaks down. The divine and human qualities of the

³³ W. SHAKESPEARE, *King Richard II*, p. 64.

³⁴ WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE, *Romeo and Juliet*, ICON Classics, San Diego, 2005, p. 43–44.

³⁵ Cf. JAMES J. HAMILTON, “Hobbes The Royalist, Hobbes The Republican”, *History of Political Thought*, 30 (2009) 3, p. 425.

³⁶ Cf. E. H. KANTOROWICZ, *op. cit.*, p. 29.

³⁷ W. SHAKESPEARE, *King Richard II*, p. 65.

“Two King’s Bodies” become sharply contrasted to each other. For King Richard, the situation is becoming unbearable. Later in the narrative, King Richard is not able to explain his royal position. Another person speaks in his name and interprets the royal government as established by God. That person is the bishop Carlisle, who embraces the role of *logothetes*. Again, he invokes the appearance of the king as the image of God (*rex imago Dei*):

What subject can give sentence on his king? And who sits here that is not Richard’s subject? Thieves are not judg’d but they are by to hear, Although apparent guilt be seen in them; And shall the figure of God’s majesty, His captain, steward, deputy elect, Anointed, crowned, planted many years, Be judg’d by subject and inferior breath, And he himself not present? O! forfend it, God, That in a Christian climate souls refin’d Should show so heinous, black, obscene a deed! I speak to subjects, and a subject speaks, Stirr’d up by God, thus boldly for his king.³⁸

In accordance with medieval tradition, the bishop sees the current situation in the light of biblical history. Yet, he leaves Richard to draw the final conclusion, and to show the similarities between the humiliated king and the humiliated Christ. The bishop perceives Richard’s situation as somehow parallel to biblical events, and thus predicts future horrors for England. Richard soon realizes the severity of his situation. Speaking to a hostile meeting of lords who had gathered around his cousin Bolinbroke, he calls them traitors. But, before being handed to his judges, King Richard has to be dethroned. According to Shakespeare, this scene is similar to a church sacrament. Richard returns his royal position to God, but not to those who had crowned him. Since nobody is entitled to lay a finger on the one God anointed and the bearer of the royal *character indelibilis*, King Richard, in defrocking himself, appears as his own celebrant: “Am I both priest and clerk? Well then, amen”³⁹. After his withdrawal from his royal position, Richard apparently returns to his previous comedic role: „No lord of thine, thou haught

³⁸ Ibid., p. 90–91.

³⁹ Ibid., p. 92.

insulting man, Nor no man's lord; I have no name, no title, No, not that name was given me at the font, But 'tis usurp'd: alack the heavy day! That I have worn so many winters out, And know not now what name to call myself!"⁴⁰

The scene with the mirror represents the culmination of Richard's double personality. The mirror has a magical effect; therefore, Richard the wizard, who is cornered and trapped as in a fairy tale, is forced to employ his magic powers against himself. The natural person he sees in the mirror no longer reflects Richard's inner experience. His physical appearance no longer coincides with his inner being. „O flatt'ring glass!...Was this face the face That every day under his household roof Did keep ten thousand men? Was this the face That like the sun did make beholders wink? Is this the face which fac'd so many follies That was at last out-fac'd by Bolingbroke?"⁴¹

Here it is instructive to refer to Hobbes's theory of authority and psychological analysis of opinion which is similar to the authority of the king developed by Shakespeare in his tragedy. In his psychological analysis of opinion in *Behemoth*, Hobbes writes about the incapability of king Charles I to keep political power and preserve civil peace, which is caused by certain opinions in divinity and politics.⁴²

As opposed to Hobbes's historical event regarding the fate of Charles I, Shakespeare poetically and with a sense of sarcasm showed the confusion and unreality of Richard II. The breaking of the mirror in which he saw his passing glory breaks not only Richard's past and present, but also every aspect of the supernatural world. That is the end of his catoptromancy. Features he has seen in the mirror reveal that he is deprived of any possibility to have a second or a supernatural body. In fact, that is the end of Richard II, and the natural appearance of a new body. In agreement with the opinion of Louis Montrose: "The body politic

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 95–6.

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 96–7.

⁴² Cf. ROBERT P. KRAYNAK, "Hobbes' Behemoth and the Argument for Absolutism", *The American Political Science Review*, 76 (1982) 4, p. 841.

inherited in the body of the prince”⁴³. In some way, we can presume that blue blood may transfer inheritance. In one note, G. Anidjar writes: “What the blood carries and preserves, in other words, is still what we would call religion”⁴⁴.

G. Anidjar shows that many fictional prerogatives can be interpreted by the inheritance of the blood, not just the body. In a way, it implies that, besides the religious motives, blood can be ideologized just as the body. However, we are interested in the way in which theological concepts become “ciphers of fictitiousness,” enabling the development of secular, political notions of a perpetual public good. For the purpose of this work, it is important to note that the king changed from a “*vicarius Christiti* to *vicarius fisci*,” i.e., from the representation of Christ, to that of the fictitious perpetuity of the public good. In “The Crown as Fiction,” Kantorowicz notes that the twelfth-century introduction of the notion of the crown in legal and fiscal matters (for example, *placita coronae*, “pleas of the crown”) began “under the impact of Canon Law concepts” in order to assume constitutional connotations that it did not have before.⁴⁵ Among various royal prerogatives, blue blood can also find its own place. In the abovementioned tragedy, we can follow the metamorphosis from a royal entity to ordinary identity, which parallels that of the fictional blue blood to red blood.

The Fictional Policy of Thomas Hobbes

As we have noted before, in the Middle Ages only kings and nobles had the privilege of practicing politics. Hobbes reveals a fundamental trait of the modern political theory. The formation of political will is explained as being based purely on fictitious reasoning: “The greatest part of those men who have written aught concerning commonwealths,

⁴³ LOUIS MONTROSE, “The Elizabethan Subject and the Spenserian Text”, in: P. Parker & D. Quint (eds.), *Literary Theory/Renaissance Texts*, Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore 1986, p. 307.

⁴⁴ GIL ANIDJAR, *Semites: Race, Religion, Literature*, Stanford University Press, Stanford 2008, p. 167.

⁴⁵ Cf. E. H. KANTOROWICZ, *op. cit.*, p. 342–3.

either suppose, or require us or beg of us to believe, that man is a creature born fit for society”⁴⁶.

Modern political theory seems in constant need of a fictitious construction. The Hobbesian contract theory for understanding fiction in politics can thereby be of great importance. The emergence of the social contract theory is in some way a response to the previous epoch, which provides the ability for others to engage in politics. The theory of the social contract is important for several reasons. First, it can be viewed as a fictional political event that never happened. In this regard, we continue to follow the path of fictional genre, which we developed in the previous sections. Also, the social contract itself has no historical foundation. Another thing that makes this theory interesting and acceptable is that apolitical individuals produce the principle of harmony that is imposed on everyone. The theoretical structure according to this theory begins with a restart, whereby it is assumed that all agree in common discourse. As every man should say to every man: “I authorize and give up my right of governing myself, to this man, or to this assembly of men, on this condition, that thou give up thy right to him, and authorize all his actions in like manner”⁴⁷.

This act explains the creation of a sovereign state or the great Leviathan, which Hobbes calls the mortal God to which we owe, under the immortal God, our peace and defense. This is the famed fictional formula, which in a new political philosophy methodically changed the direction of understanding the formation of the state. In effect, with this formula, Hobbes marked the common man as the true “author” of politics. When each individual becomes a political actor, this will mark the beginning of the dissolution of blue blood and its transmutation into red blood. In some way, the phenomenon of red blood can indicate the emergence of the modern citizen and a new political world. One may ask why a certain political fiction, such as the social contract theory, can somehow appear more legitimate and more rational than

⁴⁶ THOMAS HOBBS, *Man and Citizen*, Hackett Publishing Company, Indianapolis and Cambridge, 1991, p. 110.

⁴⁷ TH. HOBBS, *Leviathan*, p. 109.

other theories. The English philosopher proposed the social contract fiction to describe the origin and the end of violence. Hobbes's use of political fiction should be regarded as necessary and reasonable insofar that it is taken seriously. Hobbes attempts to establish "political science," at least in his works that clearly follow the ideal of *scientia civilis*, to be a field as rigorous as geometry. His logical status is determined from the viewpoint of *scientia civilis*, in the sense that it acts as a scientific premise upon which one can build the state as an artificial or shadow person. Starting from such political premises, Hobbes sets a form of fictional genre that could follow from his analyses and theories of authorization and representation. The theory of authorization is a necessary instrument in the construction of the body politic. In its heart is the notion of the person, which covers various modalities, relations, representatives and the present. With such a definition, Hobbes begins chapter XVI: "A person is he whose words or actions are considered either as his own, or as representing the words or actions of another man, or of any other thing in whom they are attributed, whether truly or by fiction"⁴⁸.

It is through the notion of a (fictitious) artificial person that Hobbes shows how a disconnected multitude of individuals can be transformed into an active political unity. To build a theory of authorization, Hobbes draws opinions from many legal and political traditions of representation. Ancient and medieval legal and political heritage include the concept of representative offices. Some of the key concepts of the theory of authorization, such as *persona*, actor, and author, he took over from Latin antiquity.

The problem of the ambiguity of the term *persona* in the theory of authorization has been recognized by Mark Neocleous:

In adopting the terminology of personification, the state is thus imagined as an entity which shares in the discourse of subjectivity, producing a particular political effect – the corporate identity of the state – and facilitating the process of incorporation so central to the trope of order. The person of the state thus not only forms the basis of the convergence of domination and unity, but does so by figuring domination as unity. At

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 101.

the same time, however, it also serves to legitimize the practices through which the state comes to dominate civil society – authority in the form of the person.⁴⁹

Based on all of this, it is our opinion that for Hobbes, this concept of *persona* was a very important source of medieval canon and civil law that would gradually invalidate the negative principle of the Roman law, which prevented direct representation. In medieval jurisprudence, the term *repraesentatio* took on the meaning of representation based on delegated powers. With the action of agency, *actora* starts to describe the verb *rapraesentare*. It represents not only concrete individuals, but also *personae fictae*, the collective body that is a recognized legal person. In fact, this collective body is a figurative fixation, what has been addressed in the present discussion. Before the modern world of politics could arise, it was necessary not merely to deprive the Emperor of any shadowy claim to supremacy, but also to establish the development of the modern conceptions of person, authorization, and representation. These two developments resulted in the founding of international law as a body of doctrine governing the relations of states, which are supposed to be free, equal, and in a state of nature.

Conclusion

The intention of this paper is primarily to explain certain meanings associated with the phrase *blue blood* (*sangre azul*). In this sense, medieval history, in particular the English medieval history, due to its turbulences, seems a most appropriate example to clarify the popular notion of blue blood. One might wonder how the phrase “blue blood” functions in the medieval historical context in which one can also find speeches on the freedom of lower nobility and citizenry. It has become evident in this study that “blue blood” primarily denotes the medieval royal prerogative, or membership in a royal or noble family.

⁴⁹ MARK NEOCLEOUS, *Imagining the State*, Open University Press, Philadelphia and Maidenhead, 2003, p. 77.

To understand the medieval time and the opportunity of that time, it is necessary to understand the relationship between ecclesial and secular authorities. The present work expands some of the ideas of E. Kantorowicz in *The King's Two Bodies*, where he develops a political theological concept, which follows the appropriation of theological metaphors; above all the ecclesiastical body of the Church and the incarnate body of Christ. Consequently, certain religious terms are simply adopted into secular civilian use. Metaphors that appear in the paper are *persona mixta* and *gemina persona*. In particular, *persona mixta* is a religious term appropriated in secular use. This concept will have great significance in marking royal prerogative. The anointed King as a double person, *persona mixta*, includes immortality. The meaning of fiction, that is, the fictional genre, is key to understanding this work. In fact, the only way to reconstruct certain aspects of legal and political language is through the use of the fiction genre. Kantorowicz emphasizes that the king's spiritual character stems from the clericalization of royal duties. This is nothing but a clear appropriation of theological concepts for political purposes. In this way, a new political *persona ficta* was legally established as a figure from which a new political construction was established.

William Shakespeare proved not only to be a virtuoso in the fiction genre, but also a great connoisseur of the political rule of medieval history. Shakespeare's *Richard II* could be read as a dismantling of political theology, one that points in the direction of liberal constitutionalism. It seems like part of *Richard II* is a turning point that sets the ground for the emergence of Hobbes's theory of the social contract. It is important to know that the political process in Hobbes's time involved only nobility and clergy. Politics was a privilege of the upper classes and not for common people. In Hobbes's theory of the social contract, he makes each individual entity political. This paper claims that this was the point at which blue blood became red. Following this, Hobbes explained the creation of the sovereign state, the emergence of the modern political world, and political science. His state is a collective body, what he called the great Leviathan, a figurative fixation that was already mentioned.

Generally, one can prove that Hobbes took poetic fictional genre and created a modern political science.

Likewise, one can infer that sacred kingship was the crucial concept that supported European monarchies. Even though blue blood may sound like a romantic fiction, we must be careful with this concept. It is a widely used metaphor in many societies, which serves to set apart certain individuals from the ordinary population for ideological purposes. This does not cohere with the proposition that all men are born equal. Even if it is still in part or in principle the physical and physiological truth; in such circumstances, the whole proposition is a battlecry, a program, or an ideology. A fiction of this type did not need any proof of veracity and credibility. Nevertheless, it should be added that the daily application of fiction often breaks through without any attempts to prove its truth or probability.

References

- ANIDJAR, GIL, *Semites: Race, Religion, Literature*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 2008.
- ANIDJAR, GIL, *Blood: A Critique of Christianity*, New York, Columbia University Press, 2014.
- ANIDJAR, GIL, 'Universal Blood.' In *Blood: Reflections on What Unites and Divides Us*, Anthony Bale and David Feldman (ed.), London, Bloomsbury, 2015.
- BARLOW, FRANK, *William Rufus*, New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1983.
- CRISP, ROGER, "Nobility in the Nicomachean Ethics", *Phronesis*, 59 (2014.) 3, pp. 231-245.
- DOUGLASS, ROBIN, "The Body Politic 'is a fictitious body'", *Hobbes Studies*, 27 (2014.), pp. 126-147.
- FELDMAN, KAREN S., "Conscience and the Concealments of Metaphor in Hobbes's 'Leviathan'", *Philosophy & Rhetoric*, 34 (2001.) 1, pp. 21-37.

- FIGGIS, JOHN NEVILLE, *Political Thought from Gerson to Grotius: 1414-1625: Seven Studies*, Kitchener, Batoche Books, 1999.
- FLEMING, SEAN, "The Two Faces of Personhood: Hobbes, Corporate Agency, and the Personality of the State", *European Journal of Political Theory*, 20 (2017) 1, pp. 1-22.
- HAMILTON, JAMES J., "Hobbes The Royalist, Hobbes The Republican", *History of Political Thought*, 30 (2009.) 3, pp. 411-454.
- HOBBS, THOMAS, *Man and Citizen*, Indianapolis and Cambridge, Hackett Publishing Company, 1991.
- HOBBS, THOMAS, *Leviathan*, Indianapolis and Cambridge, Hackett Publishing Company, 1994.
- HUIZINGA, JOHAN, *The Waning of the Middle Ages*, London, Penguin Books, 1976.
- JACKSON, ROBERT, *Sovereignty*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 2007.
- KAHN, VICTORIA, *The Future of Illusion. Political Theology and Early Modern Texts*, Chicago and London, The University of Chicago Press, 2014.
- KANTOROWICZ, ERNST H., *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Medieval Political Theology*, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1997.
- KRAYNAK, ROBERT P., "Hobbes's Behemoth and the Argument for Absolutism", *The American Political Science Review*, 76 (1982) 4, pp. 837-847.
- MCCOY, RICHARD C., *Alterations of State: Sacred Kingship in the English Reformation*, New York, Columbia University Press, 2002.
- MONTROSE, LOUIS, "The Elizabethan Subject and the Spenserian Text", *Literary Theory/renaissance Texts*, P. Parker and D. Quint (ed.), Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986.
- NEOCLEOUS, MARK, *Imagining The State*, Philadelphia and Maidenhead, Open University Press, 2003.
- SHAKESPEARE, WILLIAM, *King Richard II*, San Diego, ICON Classics, 2005.

- SHAKESPEARE, WILLIAM, *Romeo and Juliet*, San Diego, ICON Classics, 2005.
- TIERNNEY, BRIAN, *Religion, Law, and the Growth of Constitutional Thought 1150-1650*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1982.
- YARNELL III, MALCOLM B., *Royal Priesthood in the English Reformation*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2013.

Izvorni znanstveni rad
Primljeno: 4. XI. 2021.
Prihvaćeno: 5. XII. 2021.

ZDRAVKO PERIĆ – MATE BUNTIĆ
Sveučilište Josipa Jurja Strossmayera u Osijeku, Filozofski fakultet –
Sveučilište u Mostaru, Filozofski fakultet
zperic@ffos.hr – mate.buntic@ff.sum.ba

KAKO JE PLAVA KRV POSTALA CRVENA

Sažetak

Ovaj rad tematizira srednjovjekovnu teološku i političku povijest, kao i razliku između plave i crvene krvi. Poznati izraz *plava krv* bio je posebno važan u srednjem vijeku, a njegov odjek prisutan je u kulturi sve do danas. Mogli bismo pomisliti da je tako apstraktan koncept tek beznačajna legenda, proizašla iz usmene predaje bez ikakvih začetaka u teoriji i književnosti. Namjera je autora predstaviti koncept plave i crvene krvi kao dio teorije fikcijskoga žanra. Diskurs fikcijskoga žanra postaje vidljiv u razmatranju kraljeva istovremenog posjedovanja prirodna i natprirodna tijela, odnosno ideje da kralj posjeduje supertijelo. U danome razdoblju stvoren je koncept plave krvi koji se odnosio na kraljevo dostojanstvo. Thomas Hobbes u svojem slavnom djelu *Levijatan* razvija teoriju društvenoga ugovora kojom objašnjava razvoj moderne političke zajednice. Kao što prikazuje ovaj rad, plava krv postaje crvena kada običan građanin postane aktivan sudionik političkoga upravljanja.

Ključne riječi: plava krv; crvena krv; *persona mixta*; *gemini persona*; kraljevstvo; metafora; politička teologija