### **POLITICAL CONCEPTS: A CRITICAL LEXICON**

## **Blood**

## Gil Anidjar

The inclusion of blood in a lexicon of political concepts would seem to require the removal of two quite formidable obstacles. First, blood is not a concept. And second, blood is not political. I shall return to the first obstacle, but I should begin by deferring to understandable reservations with regards to the removal of the second. For who, after all, would want to claim blood for the political, to make blood political and tear down the wall, close the gap that separates blood from politics? Who would wish together to have and to hold in unholy matrimony blood and politics? Are not the worst perversions, the worst exceptions, of our global political history conjured easily enough by this ominous apposition? At the most basal, as the most basal, blood functions as a liminal marker, the potent sign of politics at its recalcitrant limits. Blood operates, or, shall we say, circulates at the outer extremes of politics, there where the shedding of blood signifies the ultimate exercise of power (ius gladii and all that), as well as the undoing of the community that descends into violence. As Martin Luther limpidly put it, "Let no one think that the world can be ruled without blood; the sword of the ruler must be red and bloody; for the world will and must be evil, and the sword is God's rod and vengeance upon it."<sup>2</sup> Accordingly, blood figures that which, from past to present, female to male, and status to contract, politics transcends, manages, or excludes; what it should, at any rate, exclude: the archaism of blood feuds, the threat of cruel and unusual punishment — or of menstruation — and the pertinacity of kinship, of tribalism, and finally of race. Like Diderot, we still "are filled with indignation at the cruelties, either civil or religious, of our ferocious ancestors, and we turn away our eyes from those ages of horror and blood." In this broad perspective, the inclusion of blood in a lexicon of political concepts — the removal of the two obstacles I have mentioned smacks of a strange revivalism, of fundamentalism even, minimally, an archaism of sorts. "To what extent have we escaped," Alain Brossat recently wondered with justifiable unease, "the archaic and obscure dramaturgy of blood, this political dramaturgy evoked by Foucault?" The question should be answered thoughtfully, the inquiry conducted with care, for it requires the exertion of the same protective vigilance that has sought to keep the floodgates erect, which haltingly prevented blood from engulfing our political existence.

A distinct kind of exertion would perhaps be demanded by a simpler and antipodal acknowledgement, namely, that blood has played (and continues to play) a central role in, has been a constitutive factor or element of, whatever we conceive politics to be. Far from an exception, in other words, blood would be the rule. As I have mentioned blood did not become a concept, was not reflectively elaborated as such, though Hegel — who else? — did propose, in The Phenomenology of Spirit, that the "universal notion, der absolute Begriff" may well be called "the universal blood," suggestively intimating that blood may be the very name of the concept. But what of it? Blood never became a political concept, nor one of the "foundations of modern political thought," yet its universality — its rule — is hardly diminished thereby. It is merely of a different order, a different register. Indeed, as Hegel makes clear, what could be more universal than blood? The phrase "flesh and blood," which long defined the legal person (or its normative horizon) is everywhere. But beyond and above it, who would deny the force of blood, the determining and general power of blood? Famously attending to a worm with a view, Spinoza opined that "all the bodies in Nature can and should be conceived in the same way as we have here conceived the blood." Everything is as if, but for the realm of concepts, the realm of political concepts in particular, blood were ubiquitous and omnipresent, locally and even globally.

The emerging paradox, if it is one, should therefore be clear. Blood is at once very much present, universally so, and absent — or absented — from politics. Its presence is both exceptional (racism, Nazism) and normal, universal. Has the exception become, yet again, the rule? Whereas it might lead us to "question the rationality of

the norm itself," of which blood is the center, a reigning universalism, one capable of finding political theologies at every corner of the globe, partakes of the sedimentation of this paradox, while claiming to resolve it. It would have us accept that blood is everywhere and therefore that politics must be shielded from it. Rendered in a familiar declension: where blood was, there politics shall be.

What I want to argue, however, is that blood irrigates a particular conception of politics, and defines a momentous political tradition that, unacknowledged as such — that is, in terms of its determined rapport to blood — may well claim universal status (with the means to prove and enforce it too) but has yet fully to achieve this status, at least reflectively and conceptually. In this tradition, which is of course not exhausted but is rather distinguished by this singular feature, blood is never a concept but it exercises, across time, a peculiar and not inconstant dominion. Blood makes and marks difference, an allegedly universal difference inscribed between bloods. Considered in this manner, blood quietly traces the contours, the external and internal limits in fact, of a unique circulatory system, a system of different bloods. Law and science, race and economics, war and the culture of peace, along with the apparatuses of the so-called modern state, all deploy their "own" blood, while concealing blood's governing or defining role across these realms. But the argument may perhaps be phrased more clearly. "All significant concepts of the modern theory of the state are liquidated theological concepts not only because of their historical development, but also because of their systematic fluidity, the recognition of which is necessary for a sociological consideration of these concepts."

Such is, at any rate, the formulation I would like to offer with this contribution. The phrasing is short and clearly plagiarized, recognizably memorable therefore, and it should assist us as we attempt to take the measure of what connects us to, and distances us from, a concept of blood, from blood as a political concept. But allow me one preliminary remark before I embark on what can only be an abbreviated exposition toward a "sociological consideration" of our political concepts — concepts such as nation and emancipation, kinship and race, law and capital, sovereign and citizen, property, inheritance, and freedom, all of which are connected by blood. I will admit it is a rather futile engagement, meant merely to make the obvious manifest, this simple fact that, far from having "an invisible influence" as Daniel Defoe once surmised, blood rather ostensibly suffuses and unites the political life of the West. In a manner that is at once unique and undeniable, blood distinguishes our political imagination — and the political institutions we insist on calling modern — and so perhaps to the precise extent that blood never comes to mind as an idea or concept. Not only has blood not been evacuated from politics, therefore, but the ominous apposition with which I began is better understood, in fact, as a simple equation. In the Christian West, blood is politics and politics is blood. Our political hematology.

A preliminary remark, then. When it comes to blood, to an understanding of blood, the distinction between literal and figurative must be suspended and rethought. For what we mean by blood has never been abstracted from what is said and done about, with and to, blood. More than that, the very distinction between literal and figurative blood – the difference between bloods — is part and parcel of the dominion of blood, enabling the dissemination of blood across seemingly distinct realms, which it covertly unifies. The absence of a concept of blood, at any rate, makes it impossible to assert with any assurance that the blood of kinship, for instance, is metaphorically derivative with regard to the presumed literal, allegedly primary, blood of physiology or medicine. The impossibility might be illustrated by way of a rich account, compellingly extensive, which brings together "the ancient belief that sperm is comprised of blood," the fact that "kinship ties were imagined as ties of shared blood," the transformation whereby the European nobility came to understand itself by way of "its genealogical records of the 'blood' ties of lineal kinship," and the sedimentation of "the rhetoric of blood" as "the means used to naturalize the role of reproduction and procreation." While not inaccurate in the vectors it reveals, and most notably with regard to the connection between kinship and race (on which more later), this description implies that a primeval physiological conviction becomes the object of a "naturalization," which otherwise seems to have been universally given, firmly and originally in place beforehand. The argument, in other words, is that a bodily fluid is in fact a metaphor that continues, by mistake or by design, to be understood literally, which it incidentally always would have been. Truly, as Gail Paster rightly emphasizes, "blood's lexical unwieldiness should not distract us from noticing a significant correlation between the scientific account of blood," its juridical and political accounts as well, and the "hierarchies in which blood figures as a key signifier." 12 It is the singularity of blood's locations and its expansion, along with its persistence across realms

and discourses that, prior to any received division into literal and figurative, will have to be confronted as a rhetorical, i.e., political, problem.

All this, in brief, means that no community was ever a "community of blood" — to invoke the phrase famously deployed by Henry Lewis Morgan — that did not first deploy an insistent rhetoric of blood, that did not speak of blood as the substance of community, even if, especially if, to take its distance from it, as if metaphorizing it. How do we know this? The Old Testament for one never uses the phrase "flesh and blood," which I mentioned earlier, nor would it imagine blood as a site of distinction between creatures of any kind. Christian translators and exegetes, however, erroneously came to imagine humankind — and even then, only those admitted in it as being "of one blood." 13 The universalization of blood, as well as its transformation into a marker of specificity, and of the latter's truth, was on its way (and recall that "to the mediaeval mind," at least, "the destiny and preordained end of Christendom was always identical with that of mankind at large"). 14 Ludwig Feuerbach, to take but one instance, partly but effectively summarizes. "As the truth of personality is unity, and as the truth of unity is reality, so the truth of real personality is – blood." Still, by what translation could the ancient Israelites, or other occupants of "the savage slot" as Michel-Rolph Trouillot called it, ever be included in this anthropotheistic schema, understood, as they famously were by Ernest Renan and countless others, as a community of blood?  $\frac{16}{1}$  Like many aggregates of the hemophilic kind — I mean the term in its strictest technical, that is, etymological and non-medical, sense — the translations of blood remain unremarked and unreflected. The postulated universality of blood grounds our political hematology, our political hemophilia. Our politics are drenched in blood. The love of blood.

"When several families are united," Aristotle famously said, "and the association aims at something more that the supply of daily needs, then comes into existence the village." Aristotle goes on to clarify the structure of the early political unit, the Greek city-state governed, he says, by kings. "Every family is ruled by the eldest, and therefore in the colonies of the family the kingly form of government prevailed because they were of the same blood." From Aristotle to Henry James Sumner Maine, William Robertson Smith and beyond, blood – identical to, yet also narrower than, kinship – would have been the undisputed and primary ground, "the sole possible ground," of the political (incidentally, despotic) community. In Maine's formulation, "the history of political ideas begins, in fact, with the assumption that kinship in blood is the sole possible ground of community in political functions." Do we not believe it still? Do we not cling, as Alain Brossat does, to a model of political emancipation that at once affirms and denies blood? "I am sick to death of bonding through kinship and 'the family," writes Donna Haraway quite poignantly. Rather than retreating toward a less hematologically incorrect phrasing, however, she proceeds further to assert that "ties through blood — including blood recast in the coin of genes and information — have been bloody enough already."

Of course, no conceptualization of blood as political can avoid the matter of race, which might otherwise be thought as the intensification of blood in the post-Reformation era. It is becoming increasingly evident, however, that there are deep and intricate connections between race and kinship — that other discourse of blood. Interestingly, what Alys Weinbaum refers to as "the race/reproduction bind" constitutes in fact "a privileged, but still rather little-explored, way of grasping dimensions of race, ethnicity and nationality" together. And indeed, few are those who have devoted their attention to the peculiarities of the "European cognatic kinship systems," and more precisely to that which, in them, "allows for a clearer understanding of certain dimensions of racist contexts." As one scholar uncharacteristically puts it, "an important component of our identity is determined by the very act of generation, defined in terms of the consubstantiability contained in the blood, which at least from Christian times has been the major symbol of our kinship system" (ibid.). What should be underscored here is the contingency, and the persistence, the unique rhetorical configuration, that has long equated blood and kinship, indeed, blood and community, in race thinking and, more importantly, before and beyond it. In this perspective, at any rate, it is no accident that Emile Benveniste's justly celebrated compendium of our inherited lexicon deploys the language of blood without ever treating blood as a technical term, much less as a concept.

To be sure, after Foucault and also against him, Ann Stoler has already asked us to widen our hematological horizons. She alerts us to the limitations of Foucault's diagnostic and of his quite orthodox periodization, whereby history would have moved from one stage to the next, from "a symbolics of blood" to "an analytics of sexuality." Stoler underscores that, after the Reformation, no blood was left behind.

The myth of blood that pervades nineteenth-century racism may be traced, as Foucault does, from an aristocratic preoccupation with legitimacy, pure blood, and descent, but not through it alone. It was equally dependent on an imperial politics of exclusion that was worked out earlier and reworked later on colonial ground. 27

Stoler does more here than extend the historical and political frame whereby blood came increasingly to govern the political imagination in its social and national registers. From kinship to colonialism, by way of the state and the "global color line," she shows that the very notion of a community of blood not only persists beyond its socalled premodern origins, but by far exceeds the discourse and practices of race. Blood rather moves through the capillaries of power — an oft repeated phrase that has not been sufficiently pondered, and least of all in its relation to the concept of circulation, the resignification and dissemination of which we owe William Harvey, and upon which Foucault also insisted. 28 From the theorists of just war to the canon lawyers, from the doctrine of the sacraments to the philosophy of property and wealth ("inheritable blood," "corruption of the blood"), from the head of the sovereign to the sacred heart, the perdurance of blood, of the community of blood, marks and shapes a massive, albeit heterogenous, political tradition. It accounts for the laws that regulate kinship, citizenship, and ownership — and international law. Essential to the canonical figurations of the body politic, that "continually renewed dream, of community as a body united by some principle of life," which since John of Salisbury have strangely been devoid of it, blood covertly and overtly shapes and defines the channels and motions that carry the family, the class, and the race, the nation and the economy too. 29 "There is, indeed," as Adriana Cavarero points out, "a sort of embryology of the body politic." Thus, following his mercantilist predecessors, and building on the work of Harvey, Hobbes writes of the "concoction" and the "sanguification of the commonwealth," the money and wealth that is the nourishment, the blood of the state (colonies, incidentally, were of a proximate metabolic order for Hobbes, that of reproduction). 31 Moses Hess well understood, and Marx also confirmed (both were redeploying an earlier claim made by Huldrych Zwingli) that the political and economic machine was feeding on the blood of the workers. 32 Not so distant from such exploitative hematologics, Hume suggested that "animals have little or no sense of virtue or vice; they quickly lose sight of the relations of blood; and are incapable of that of right and property."33 A more recent formulation realizes the metaphor further still and thereby captures the matter exemplarily. After September 11, say Catherine Waldby and Robert Mitchell, "the excessive desire to give blood was perhaps driven by a sense that the body politic was itself wounded in the attacks."34

Thus filling a strange conceptual vacuum in the body politic, communities of blood have served and free-refilled, at different times supplemented, fashioned and preserved, the competing forms of our political hematology. Referring to one instance of this phenomenon, Foucault writes that "in these rituals in which blood flowed, society found new vigor and formed for a moment a single great body." This accounts as well for the adoption of variants of jus sanguinis in the modern state, even if it conceals the fiction of its Roman filiation, and its essential relation to race and genealogical thinking. At once widespread and historically contingent, blood defines a vision of politics that has yet to be recognized in its relative integrity. But contrary to the faulty translation I have cited above, its history does not go back to Aristotle, nor to a proverbial Semitic bloodthirstiness. It does not hark back to Roman political notions, and even less to the otherwise obvious candidate, the concept of consanguinitas originally deployed in Roman law. As Gianna Pomata has in fact demonstrated, and Frank Roumy recently corroborated, the Latin notion of consanguinity only began to define the "community of blood" around the twelfth century, at the time when Aristotelian embryology was beginning to compete with Galenic theories. This extraordinary development — at once juridical and medical — involves a well-known redefinition of the family, and it has been more or less fully translated into the modern codes of

law that have taken over the planet as if by miracle. 38 Claude Meillassoux uniquely argued, furthermore, that critiques and dismissals notwithstanding, blood continues to inform the anthropological study of kinship. 39

The emergence of the community of blood mostly coincides – but this is no mere coincidence – with the first "disciplinary revolution," whereby each and every Christian was transformed into a vessel of Christ's blood, a blood the devout were given to drink en masse, if you'll forgive the interlingual pun, in a sacramental practice that was theologically sealed in 1215, and fully canonized in 1280. The community of blood, the corpus mysticum (an expression that "passed from the Eucharist to the Church," and came to designate the visible body of the Church, instead of the ritualized, and mysterious, action of the sacrament) was not only growing, it was hardening in a peculiar manner. 41 As theologians were reminding Christians of doctrinal subtleties, that "we eat God not so that he changes into us but so that we change into him," for instance,  $\frac{42}{1}$  it was becoming clearer to many that Christian blood was not quite the same as other bloods. Interestingly, Ernst Kantorowicz described in quite meticulous details the historical (and physiological) transformation whereby a fundamental difference between bloods emerges, although he puzzled over its origins, and strangely confined it to the sole body, that is, the sole two bodies, of the king. Having underscored the role of God (and not of blood, not explicitly) in royal birth, Kantorowicz goes on to highlight a process whereby ritual could ultimately be abandoned, as the essential difference it made had now become innate. "The Holy Spirit, which in former days was manifested by the voting of the electors, while his gifts were conferred by the anointment, now was seated in the royal blood itself, as it were, natura et gratia, by nature and by grace — indeed, 'by nature' as well; for the royal blood now appeared as a somewhat mysterious fluid." What happened then was that "one began to combine the dynastic idea with philosophical doctrines implying a belief in certain royal qualities and potencies dwelling in the blood of kings and creating, so to speak, a royal species of man" (ibid.; emphasis added). We have just seen, of course, that there had been another ritual that could, and would, confer on a larger group of individuals a new kind of blood, "a somewhat mysterious fluid" indeed, and the status of a novel species of man. 44

Ensued a peculiar history of Christian theophagy  $\frac{45}{2}$  and of sacrifice, accusations of ritual murder, limpieza de sangre, projections of blood-thirst onto Jews, witches, and savages, and of course mass murder, the long and short of it, all of which ensured further coagulation. In Roberto Esposito's terms, the communitas was being misunderstood. No longer an obligation and a subtraction, the giving of that which one does not own or have, blood became a property, a having and a being simultaneously, res publica christiana. 46 One could have "Christian blood" or be of it. Christian blood, at any rate, would become completely distinct, completely good and, more importantly, completely pure – if also vulnerable to all kinds of attacks and contaminations ("If thou dost shed / One drop of Christian blood . . ." warns fair Portia Shylock). 47 One could then make peace, finally in the year 1648 for example — in order to stop another "effusion of Christian blood" (as the Treatise of Westphalia describes it). 48 From there, at any rate, the community of blood moved rapidly ahead, toward the modern nation, with all due respect to Benedict Anderson's puzzling claim that "from the start the nation was conceived in language, not in blood, and that one could be 'invited into' the imagined community." 49 Contributing to what should remain a baffling development, Thomas Hobbes and James Harrington had incurred their debt to William Harvey, "the revolution of blood" was pushing through the emergence of liberal — and illiberal — political thought. 50 Perhaps because his "early work with Boyle was on the human blood," Locke expressed doubts about the role blood played in succession and inheritance, or about the ability of power to purify blood. 51 He did think that "if language be capable of expressing any thing distinctly and clearly, that of kindred, and the several degrees of nearness of blood, is one."52 The revolution of blood was easing other judgments, blood judgments, by way of reasonable doubt, and making its way to Rousseau's "ties of blood," 53 to blood quantum, the "one drop rule," race science and eugenics, 54 and the "blood feuds" of the AIDS crisis. 55 Blood lies at the foundation of the modern state, and continues to irrigate it. As Edmund Burke aptly put it, "we have given to our frame of polity the image of a relation in blood." 56 And this "image" (Auden called it "a cement of blood" without which, he said, "no secular wall" would "safely stand")<sup>57</sup> was fast moving forward still, toward what David Schneider described as "American Kinship." One could argue (as I do elsewhere) that Richard Hofstadter might have expounded here on "the hematological style in American politics." But due

considerations force me to acknowledge here that when it comes to blood (and to national anthems), the United States is hardly exceptional or paradigmatic. It is merely exemplary. 59

Now, in a remarkable book Kathleen Davis demonstrated the intricacies according to which periodization is among the most effective, and unacknowledged technologies of rule. 60 Davis shows this by way of the concept of feudalism, which was essential to a double distancing that, always political, always juridico-political, separates the modern from the medieval, and the metropole from the colonial. 61 Medievalism is colonialism, Davis compellingly argues. And vice-versa. Key to her argument is the grounding of modern sovereignty – the legitimacy of the modern age – not only in time and space but more precisely in a radical rupture that leaves it as if suspended in "radical newness" (94). The medieval/modern periodization can thus serve "as a substitute for this absent foundation of sovereignty, and thereby installs certain characteristics of the 'modern' in the place of the sovereign. In this sense, periodization functions as sovereign decision" (80). Leaving aside the role and function of blood in sovereignty ("Do you not feel sovereignty coursing through your veins?" asked a French revolutionary). 62 it should be clear from what I have said so far that blood – the paradox of blood I laid out at the beginning of this essay — partakes of this very structure: where blood was, there shall politics be. By turning (as I shall shortly) to the so-called "Middle Ages," I do not at all mean to produce another iteration of this periodizing narrative, another cutting decision to "sustain the 'cloak-and-dagger' drama of 'secularization'" (82). I wish rather to document a remarkable circularity in the way rupture – or shall we say, supersession – is articulated, the way in which blood operates as a site of decision and distinction, an index of sovereignty and community that is at once social, territorial, and temporal, ultimately legal as well. Stuttered otherwise, blood is through and through political, which is to say that Western politics, Christian politics, must be rethought in its hematological registers, and out of blood – the very concept.

#### **Blood Parts**

"Traditionally," Tomaž Mastnak explains, "the Church had been averse to the shedding of blood. Ecclesia abhorret a sanguine was a principle ever present in patristic writings and conciliar legislation." 63 What this meant was that killing – shedding blood, in the inherited, biblical parlance – no matter whose and no matter the circumstances, was considered a sin. "Even killing a pagan was homicide," which means that this was an awfully serious rule. Indeed, "from the fourth century to the eleventh century, the Church as a rule imposed disciplinary measures on those who killed in war, or at least recommended that they do penance" (16). One pope had referred to bishops who did engage in warfare as "false priests," because "their hands were 'stained with human blood"; another referred to "proponents of war (as) 'sons of the devil" (14). What changed, then? The exception became the rule – and a different rule it was. Talk about a revolution. What happened is that the idea of warfare became licit; that violence and the shedding of blood became permissible rather than something impossible to avoid or outright condemned. And Pope Gregory VII, all too easy to blame at this point, the same pope "after whom the Church reform has been called, is (also) held responsible for the profound changes in the Christian attitude toward bearing arms that this idea [of licit warfare] implied" (18). His followers, Alexander II and Urban II, did lend a helping hand. They were accessory to the perfect murder, as it were, and hardly a bloodless one. There were others, of course, who joined the efforts of the emerging populus christianus, the Christian people. The most dramatic change at any rate occurred in 1054 (the year of the *filioque* controversy which hardened the schism between the Eastern and Western churches) in the city of Narbonne. 64 Prior to this "peace council," there had been a rule, which, true to the Church's abhorrence of blood, had "prohibited the shedding of human blood." Yet, and to make a long story short, "the councilors of Narbonne substituted, as it were, the word Christian for the world human." They also declared, for good reiterative measure, that "no Christian should kill another Christian, for whoever kills a Christian undoubtedly sheds the blood of Christ (quia qui Christianum occidit, sine dubio Christi sanguinem fundit)" (37 & 37n215). This was a giant step indeed, if not necessarily for humankind, at least for God. For whereas it had earlier been recognized, as Alexander II wrote, that "God is not pleased by the spilling of blood, nor does he rejoice in the perdition of the evil one," and whereas "all laws, ecclesiastical as well as secular, forbid the shedding of human blood," it was now becoming possible to enact, practice and enforce, for the love of God, a newfound distinction between bloods. 66 This great step was in need of only one

additional, and very light, push. Urban II is the one who obliged. It was under his watch that it became "not only permissible but eminently salutary to use arms" - against whom? Against the infidel enemy, of course. War "against the enemies of God" quickly became "meritorious," it was "divinely ordered" (50). From there on, things took a rapid and increasingly bloody turn. Heads would soon begin to fall all the way to Jerusalem, where, as one medieval chronicle describes it, "men rode in blood up to their knees and the bridle reins." This is hardly a lone event in history, of course, which may be why the same writer goes on to add an important caption, commenting on its singular dimension, namely, "that it was a just and splendid judgment of God, that this place should be filled with the blood of unbelievers, since it had suffered so long from their blasphemies." Thus it was that the Peace of God ("no Christian should kill another Christian, for whoever kills a Christian undoubtedly sheds the blood of Christ") became the occasion for a new and novel notion of interventionism, a Christian interventionism; for the newfound and radical involvement of the Church in a world of men newly divided. "Intus Pax, foris terrores" (95). Call it peace as the War on Terror. More important, at least for our purposes, Christianitas, which had surely begun to take shape "among the various preconditions of the crusading movement," was now reaching an accomplished stage of its formation. It was establishing itself as "populus Christianus, the Christian people, united under the supreme authority of the pope . . . bound together as Christendom (in) a common worldly pursuit and a common army . . . fighting for the Christian res publica, the common weal" (92-3).

"Like his peacemaking predecessors," Urban II was filled with good intentions (incidentally, one reviewer criticized Mastnak, unfairly I think, for refusing to "accept that Westerners associated with the crusades" – but allow me to repeat this beautiful turn of phrase: "Westerners associated with the crusades" - "were ever well intentioned"). 68 This pope too "condemned fratricidal wars in the West" (94). What was intolerable to him, indeed, unconscionable, was the spilling of Christian blood. Thus was the world divided. "Effunditur sanguis Christianus, Christi sanguine redemptus . . . Christian blood, redeemed by the blood of Christ, has been shed," he used to lament. And what he was thereby articulating was, Mastnak says, a new kind of "blood-brotherhood the founding of Christian unity in blood" (ibid.). This was, let me repeat this too, all well intended, all in the name of love, in other words, if not the love of blood (actually, it now depends which blood, doesn't it?). Which is why John of Salisbury wrote that he would refrain from calling those "whose normal occupation it is to shed human blood," those who "wage legitimate war 'men of blood', since even (King) David was called a man of blood not because he engaged in wars which were legitimate but on account of Uriah, whose blood he criminally shed."69 You could shed blood in the name of love, therefore, without becoming a man of blood. Or, shedding that blood which is not one (not true blood, that is, not one like Christian blood), you would thereby join in the brotherhood. You could become, you had become, a different man of blood, a man of different blood, since "the substance of that brotherhood was blood, consanguinity in faith. And once faith was filled with blood, it was just a short step to the letting of blood of the unfaithful. Or rather, if faith was in blood, with the shedding of unfaithful blood, unbelief was drained" (126). The Church, which had long "considered bloodshed as a source of pollution now encouraged the shedding of blood – non-Christian blood – as a means to purification. When the reformed Church established its domination over Christendom, Christendom launched a military offensive to establish its domination over the world" (129).

Bernard of Clairvaux was yet another, among many others, who decided to join the Christian war effort and brought to it more novelty in the form of his propitious doctrine of malicidium, the killing of evil. "The soldier of Christ, Bernard was to repeat, is safe when he kills, even safer when he is killed. If he is killed, it is for his own good; if he kills, he does it for Christ." Others, from Pierre Dubois to Catherine of Sienna, would later support our troops and lend another helping hand. But we ain't seen nothin' yet. This was only the beginning, and the Eucharist, along with the doctrine of transubstantiation, had yet to come. Or the Reformation. It would take these and a few more additional steps for Christian blood to become fully distinct and distinguished, for it to become pure and "wonderful blood," as Caroline Walker Bynum describes it (though I should mention that Bynum writes about a later period and never refers to Mastnak's work). By then, one would of course come to wonder, with Catherine of Sienna, "how anyone except Christ could save souls by shedding blood, especially the blood of others." In this too, I suppose, there "remained a mystery," one which had been "embedded in the context of the crusade, itself seen as a mystery" (345). One might further wonder how the shedding of blood could ever become the saving of souls – the blood and soul of others too. But of one thing, one could nonetheless

be certain. It was that, when it came to Christian blood, every drop would count. As for the blood of others, what can I say? It was on its way to start flowing in rivers and in floods. Alternatively, it was to be weighed and measured, sometimes just in drops: drop by drop. By blood then. Nor was this the first, or the last, time. What would no longer be in doubt by then was that that there was a difference between bloods, that there was a blood that was – shall we say, essentially? – a different, and purer blood. It had undergone a first and gigantic transformation toward an asymmetric universality, a generalized hematology, and the establishment of blood, not as a concept, no, but as an indubitable foundation of Western, which is to say, Christian, politics.

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- 1. By "blood is not a concept" I mean merely to say that blood does not appear to be a reflective notion upon which rulers, jurists, philosophers, or political theorists would have worked or, indeed, reflected, that they would have elaborated, instituted or institutionalized in a manner comparable to the way they have worked and reflected on, institutionalized (or sought to institutionalize), say, sovereignty, or representation, justice and democracy, or the body even. On the face of things, in other words, blood may or may not "properly" belong to medicine or to anthropology, but it does not belong, it does not seem to belong, nor should it perhaps belong, to politics and political philosophy.
- 2. Martin Luther, quoted in Sheldon S. Wolin, Politics and Vision: Continuity and Innovation in Western Political Thought (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004) 142.
- 3. Denis Diderot, quoted in Sankar Muthu, Enlightenment against Empire (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003) 109.
- 4. Alain Brossat, "Les dernières heures de la grande dramaturgie du sang?" in Drôle d'époque 19 (Automne 2006) 29; more assertive, Pheng Cheah declares that "the decolonizing nation is not an archaic throwback to traditional forms of community based on the blind ties of blood and kinship" (P. Cheah, Spectral Nationality: Passages of Freedom from Kant to Postcolonial Literatures of Liberation (New York: Columbia University Press, 2003) 382.
- 5. G.W.F. Hegel, Phenomenology of Spirit, trans. A.V. Miller (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977). The full passage in the section called "Consciousness" reads as follows: "This simple infinity, or the absolute Notion, may be called the simple essence of life, the soul of the world, the universal blood, whose omnipresence is neither disturbed nor interrupted by any difference, but rather is itself every difference, as also their supersession; it pulsates within itself but does not move, inwardly vibrates, yet is at rest. It is self-identical, for the differences are tautological; they are differences that are none" (100).
- 6. Blood never registered in Quentin Skinner's Foundations of Modern Political Thought vol 1 & 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), nor in Rethinking the Foundations of Modern Political Thought, edited by Annabel Brett and James Tully with Holly Hamilton-Bleakley (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006).
- 7. Jean-Pierre Baud writes a unique, albeit, brief history of the juridical nature of blood, which he traces back to the Old Testament (Greece is not mentioned), by way of Roman law and the notion of person ("la plus remarquable création juridique de la civilisation romaine") and the tradition of blood donation that links Jesus-Christ to military and civilian blood banks.
- 8. Benedict de Spinoza, "Correspondence" in On the Improvement of the Understanding. The Ethics. Correspondence, trans. R.H.M. Elwes (New York: Dover Publications, 1955) 291 (Letter XV (XXXII), dated November 20, 1665).
- 9. I quote from Norman O. Brown's "Filthy Lucre," in Brown, Life Against Death: The Psychoanalytic Meaning of History (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 1985) 234.
- 10. Daniel Defoe, The Compleat English Gentleman, quoted in J.C.D. Clark, English Society 1660-1832: Religion, Ideology and Politics During the Ancien Regime (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000) 229.
- 11. I cite from Elise Lemire's important work on race in America because it is exemplary in the conciseness, precision and exhaustiveness of its account of "the rhetoric of blood" (E. Lemire, "Miscegenation": Making Race in America (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002) 36-37.
- 12. Gail Kern Paster, The Body Embarrassed: Drama and the Disciplines of Shame in Early Modern England (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1993) 69.

- 13. Acts of the Apostles, 17: 26; neither Greek nor Latin use the word 'blood'. for an account of the success of the phrase, see Paul Goodman, Of One Blood: Abolitionism and the Origins of Racial Equality (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998). As Marvin Fox puts it in a proximate context, "all human beings are supposedly equally endowed with knowledge of the natural law, which is inscribed in their heart, but some are apparently more equal than others" (M. Fox, *Interpreting Maimonides: Studies in Methodology, Metaphysics, and Moral Philosophy*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990 149). Marc Shell probably went the furthest in exploring the consequences of this equality of blood with regard to kinship in Christianity (M. Shell, *Children of the Earth: Literature, Politics, and Nationhood*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993) while Uli Linke extends the argument to the entirety of Indo-European history (U. Linke, *Blood and Nation: The European Aesthetics of Race*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1999). I discuss this site of biblical translation in my "Blutgewalt," Oxford Literary Review 31: 2 (December 2009) 153-174.
- 14. Anton-Hermann Chroust, "The Corporate Idea and the Body Politic in the Middle Ages," The Review of Politics 9: 4 (October 1947) 430.
- 15. Ludwig Feuerbach, The Essence of Christianity, trans. George Eliot (Amherst: Prometheus Books, 1989) 146.
- 16. On the "savage slot," see M.-R. Trouillot, "Anthropology and the Savage Slot: The Poetics and Politics of Otherness" in *Recapturing Anthropology: Working in the Present*, Richard G. Fox, ed. (Santa Fe: School of American Research Press, 1991) 17-44; on the concept of "anthropotheism," see Stefanos Geroulanos, An Atheism That is Not Humanist Emerges in French Thought (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010); on Renan in this context, see Benzion Netanyahu, "Américo Castro and His View of the Origins of the Pureza de Sangre," Proceedings of the American Academy for Jewish Research 46/47 (1979 1980) 397-457.
- 17. Aristotle, Politics, 1252b, trans. Jowett.
- 18. This argument is of course a mere footnote to Jacques Derrida's Politics of Friendship, trans. George Collins (New York: Verso, 1997).
- 19. Henry James Sumner Maine, *Ancient Law: Its Connection to the History of Early Society*, Introduction by J.H. Morgan (Charleston, NC.: BiblioBazaar, 2008) 99; of course, as Karuna Mantena explains in her brilliant account of Maine, blood kinship is a fiction (Maine says "assumption") but it is taken to be a universal fiction (K. Mantena, *Alibis of Empire: Henry Maine and the Ends of Liberal Imperialism*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010, 79).
- 20. Donna J. Haraway, *Modest\_Witness@Second\_Millenium*. *FemaleMan©\_Meets\_OncoMouse™*: *Feminism and Technoscience* (New York: Routledge, 1997) 265. 

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- 21. Alys Eve Weinbaum, Wayward Reproductions: Genealogies of Race and Nation in Transatlantic Modern Thought (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004) 5.
- 22. Peter Wade, ed., Race, Ethnicity and Nation: Perspectives from Kinship and Genetics (New York: Berghahn Books, 2009) 1.
- 23. Enric Porqueres i Gené, "Kinship Language and the Dynamics of Race" in Wade, ed., Race, Ethnicity and Nation, 127; Christiane Klapisch-Zuber acknowledges and documents the particular "manière dont l'Occident s'est représenté la parenté et la filiation," "les outils mentaux et graphiques dont l'Occident chrétien a disposé," though she focuses on the arboreal rather than the hematological (C. Klapisch-Zuber, *L'ombre des ancêtres. Essai sur l'imaginaire médiéval de la parenté*, Paris: Fayard, 2000, pg 14 & 19). The two are of course related (26-28, 97), although Klapisch-Zuber seems to suggest that the representations (such as the tree) are all figures of consanguinity (242, 249).
- 24. I elaborate on the overdetermined relation of blood and kinship in "We Have Never Been Jewish: An Essay in Asymmetric Hematology" in Mitchell Hart, ed., Jewish Blood: Reality and Metaphor in History, Religion, and Culture (London and New York: Routledge, 2009) 31-56.
- 25. Émile Benveniste, Le vocabulaire des institutions indo-européennes (Paris: Minuit, 1969), volume 1 being the most relevant with regard to kinship (parenté).
- 26. Foucault, The History of Sexuality, Volume 1: An Introduction, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Pantheon, 1978) 148; earlier, and in a different register, Foucault had written of "the shift from a criminality of blood to a criminality of fraud" (Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan, New York: Vintage, 1995, p. 77).

- 27. Ann Laura Stoler, Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault's History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things (Durham: Duke University Press, 1995) 51.
- 28. S. Todd Lowry, "The Archaeology of the Circulation Concept in Economic Theory" *Journal of the History of Ideas* 35: 3 (July September 1974) 429-444; and see Michel Foucault, *Sécurité*, *Territoire*, *Population* (Cours au Collège de France, 1977-1978) (Paris: Hautes Études/Gallimard/Seuil, 2004).
- 29. Jacques Rancière, On the Shores of Politics, trans. Liz Heron (London: Verso, 1995) 88.
- 30. Adriana Cavarero, Stately Bodies: Literature, Philosophy, and the Question of Gender, trans. Robert de Lucca and Deanna Shemek (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2002) 113.
- 31. Jonathan Gil Harris, Sick Economies: Drama, Mercantilism, and Disease in Shakespeare's England (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004) 167; Hobbes, Leviathan, Richard Tuck, ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 19) ch. 24, 174; on the absence of blood from the body politic, see my "Lines of Blood: Limpieza de Sangre as Political Theology" in Blood in History and Blood Histories, Mariacarla Gadebusch Bondio, ed. (Firenze: Sismel Edizioni del Galluzzo / Micrologus Library, 2005) 119-136.
- 32. On Zwingli's "combination of money, blood, and the sale of bodies," see Valentin Groebner, *Liquid Assets, Dangerous Gifts: Presents and Politics at the End of the Middle Ages*, trans. Pamela E. Selwyn (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2002) 105 & 149.
- 33. David Hume, "Of Pride and Humility of Animals" in *Treatise of Human Nature*, Book II, section 12; David Hume, "Of Pride and Humility of Animals" in *Treatise of Human Nature*, Book II, section 12; "It is apparent," writes David Warren Sabean, "that dividing property among all the children regardless of sex, models the flow of property in a parallel manner to the way theologians modeled the flow of blood or substance" (D.W. Sabean, "From Clan to Kindred: Kinship and the Circulation of Property in Premodern and Modern Europe" in *Heredity Produced: At the Crossroads of Biology, Politics, and Culture*, 1500-1870, edited by Staffan Müller-Wille and Hans-Jörg Rheinberger (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 2007) 42).
- 34. Catherine Waldby and Robert Mitchell, *Tissue Economies: Blood, Organs, and Cell Lines in Late Capitalism* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006) 4.
- 35. Foucault, Discipline and Punish, 216.
- 36. As Paul Kahn writes, "the distinction between citizen and noncitizen is the fundamental inequality of political life. This inequality is defined both geographically and historically. The dual sources of this political inequality are represented explicitly in the dual sources of citizenship at birth: bloodline and geography, or ius sanguinis and ius soli . . . Our political communities, even our liberal communities, are overwhelmingly founded on 'blood and soil.'" (P. W. Kahn, Putting Liberalism in its Place (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2005) 44-5). On jus sanguinis in modern Europe, see Rogers Brubaker, Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1992), and see Peter Sahlins, Unnaturally French: Foreign Citizens in the Old Regime and After (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004); and see next note.
- 37. Gianna Pomata, "Blood Ties and Semen Ties: Consanguinity and Agnation in Roman Law" in *Gender, Kinship, Power: A Comparative and Interdisciplinary History*, Mary Jo Maynes et al. Eds. (New York and London: Routledge, 1996) 43-64; E. Champeaux, "Jus Sanguinis. Trois façons de calculer la parenté au Moyen Âge," *Revue historique de droit français et étranger* (1933) 241-290; Anne Lefebvre-Teillard, "lus sanguinis: L'émergence d'un principe (Éléments d'histoire de la nationalité française)," *Revue critique de droit international privé* 82: 2 (1993) 223-250; Frank Roumy, "La naissance de la notion canonique de consanguinitas et sa réception dans le droit civil" in *L'hérédité entre Moyen Âge et Époque moderne*, Maaike van der Lugt & Charles de Miramon, eds. (Firenze: Sismel Edizioni del Galluzzo / Micrologus Library, 2008) 41-66; on Aristotle and Galen, see Thomas Laqueur's account in his *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1990).
- 38. Needless to say, blood ties were always fictive ties, as the practice of adoption would easily demonstrate; see e.g., Kristin Elizabeth Gager, *Blood Ties and Fictive Ties: Adoption and Family Life in Early Modern France* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996) and see Zrinka Stahuljak, *Bloodless Genealogies of the French Middle Ages: Translation, Kinship, and Metaphor* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2005).
- 39. Claude Meillassoux, *Mythes et limites de l'anthropologies: Le sang et les mots* (Lausanne: Editions Page Deux, 2001).

- 40. Philip S. Gorski, *The Disciplinary Revolution: Calvinism and the Rise of the State in Early Modern Europe* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003); note that Gorski entirely ignores Catholic precedents to his argument.
- 41. Henri de Lubac, *Corpus Mysticum: The Eucharist and the Church in the Middle Ages*, trans. Gemma Smmonds, Richard Price, and Christopher Stephens (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2006) 250.
- 42. Quoted in Caroline Walker Bynum, *Wonderful Blood: Theology and Practice in Late Medieval Norther Germany and Beyond* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007) 139.
- 43. Ernst H. Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies: A Study in Mediaeval Political Theology* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997) 331; emphasis added.
- 44. Kantorowicz acknowledges the existence of "a race promoted by Christ from the very beginnings of the Christian faith, a most holy royal house to which God had granted a heavenly oil for the anointment of its kings," yet for him, such "a royal stock (was) endowed with miraculous gifts the like of which not even the Church could claim" (333). He is, in other words, thinking about Christianity, but for him, "the idea of a specially refined soul, 'subtle and noble,' and infused in the blood of princes" is neither Aristotelian, nor Stoic. It is "reminiscent rather of the Hermetic tenet concerning the creation of the souls of kings, but it seems doubtful that this doctrine was known at that time" (332).
- 45. Preserved Smith, *A Short History of Christian Theophagy* (Chicago and London: Open Court Publishing, 1922).
- 46. Roberto Esposito, *Communitas: The Origin and Destiny of Community*, trans. Timothy Campbell (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010) 5-7.
- 47. William Shakespeare, The Merchant of Venice, Jay L. Hallo, ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994) 4.1.111-112.
- 48. Randall Lesaffer, "Peace treaties from Lodi to Westphalia" in *Peace Treaties and International Law in European History From the Late Middle Ages to World War One*, R. Lesaffer, ed. (Cambridge University Press, 2004) 29.
- 49. Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1991) 145; see Marc Shell's implicit answer to Anderson on the question "is there a nationalism without racism?" in Shell, *Children of the Earth*, 179ff. I would ask differently, whether nationalism, as it is conceived in Christian Europe, could exist without blood?
- 50. See Uday Mehta, "Kinship and Friendship: Two Conceptions of Political Action," unpublished paper; John Rogers, *The Matter of Revolution: Science, Poetry, and Politics in the Age of Milton* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1996), and see Norman O. Brown discussion of liberty and fraternity in *Love's Body* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966), as well as Shell, *Children of the Earth*. Michael Rogin explores the (blood) connections between liberalism and paternalism, primitive accumulation and Indian removal in *Fathers and Children: Andrew Jackson and the Subjugation of the American Indian* (New York: Vintage, 1976).
- 51. Ian Shapiro, "Introduction: Reading Locke Today" in John Locke, *Two Treatises of Government and A Letter Concerning Toleration*, ed. Ian Shapiro (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003) xii; Victor Nuovo mentions that "the preface to Boyle's *Memoirs for the Natural History of Humane Blood* (1684) is addressed to Locke" (V. Nuovo, *Christianity, Antiquity, and Enlightenment: Interpretations of Locke* (Dordrecht: Springer, 2010) 107n9).
- 52. Locke, Two Treatises, 67; for Locke's suspicion of the relevance of blood quantum in succession and inheritance, see 70, on power and blood, see 139.
- 53. James Q. Whitman, *The Origins of Reasonable Doubt: Theological Roots of the Criminal Trial* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008); Jean-Jacques Rousseau, "Discourse on the Origin and the Foundations of Inequality among Men" in *The Discourses and Other Early Political Writings*, Victor Gourevitch, ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997) 118; Edmund Burke berated the French assembly on their high regard for Rousseau, "His blood they transfuse into their minds," he had written, "and into their manners."
- 54. Daniel J. Kevles, *In the Name of Eugenics: Genetics and the Uses of Human Heredity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985).
- 55. Eric A. Feldman and Ronald Bayer, eds., Blood Feuds: AIDS, Blood, and the Politics of Medical Disaster (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998).

- 56. Edmund Burke, Reflections on the Revolution in France, Frank M. Turner, ed. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2003) 30.
- 57. Auden, "Vespers" quoted in Norman O. Brown, *Love's Body* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1966) 27.
- 58. David M. Schneider, *American Kinship: A Cultural Account* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980); and see also Schneider's *A Critique of the Study of Kinship* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1984).
- 59. It is because "the United States of America and the Republic of France stand out uniquely in the modern world as states with . . . a conception of citizenship based on place of birth rather than on ethnic or 'blood' ties" that I would insist on the non-paradigmatic and unexceptional (Norman Ravitch, "Your People, My People; Your God, My God: French and American Troubles Over Citizenship," *The French Review* 70: 4 (March 1997) 515), for this only appears paradoxical if one ignores the determining role and function of blood in, say, kinship or property, nation and race, in the modern state at large.
- 60. Kathleen Davis, *Periodization and Sovereignty: How Ideas of Feudalism and Secularization Govern the Politics of Time* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008); further references in the body of the text.
- 61. A glance at Blackstone suffices to recognize that feudalism too is another bloody concept, that blood plays, in other words, an essential role in its elaboration (see "Rights of Things Title by Descent," in Sir William Blackstone, *Commentaries on the Laws of England*, Hardcastle Browne, ed. (St Paul: West Publishing, 1897), e.g., 275, 279, 285.
- 62. Cited in Charles Leslie Wayper, *Political Thought* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1954) ix.
- 63. Tomaž Mastnak, *Crusading Peace: Christendom*, the Muslim World, and Western Political Order (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002) 16.
- 64. On the *filioque* controversy, see Harold J. Berman, *Law and Revolution: The Formation of the Western Legal Tradition* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1983) 105, 178ff. & 581n26.
- 65. Mastnak, *Crusading*, 37-8. Earlier, "around 861, Pope Nicholas I had declared that soldiers of this world (*milites seculi*) were distinct from the soldiers of the Church (*milites ecclesiae*), so it was not becoming to the soldiers of the Church to fight worldly battles (*saeculo militare*) in which blood would necessarily be shed" (22-3).
- 66. Alexander II, quoted in Mastnak, Crusading, 21.
- 67. Raymond of Aguilers, quoted in Mastnak, Crusading, 60-1.
- 68. Bernard Hamilton, reviewing Crusading Peace: Christendom, the Muslim World, and Western Political Order in The American Historical Review 108: 4 (October 2003) 1204.
- 69. John of Salisbury, *Policraticus*, Cary J. Nederman, ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990) 173; and see Mastnak, *Crusading Peace*, 154.
- 70. Bernard of Clairvaux, quoted in Mastnak, Crusading Peace, 169.

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