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THE BODY POLITIC. On the History of a Famous Simile

IIRO KAJANTO

Origin of the Simile

Antiquity has bequeathed to us at least two similes of political organization, which in some sense are still alive. One is the well-known ship of state, first found in Ps.-Theognis 667-82 and made famous by Horace's Ode 1,14 *O navis referent...* The simile or allegory is simple, its main point being the stress it lays upon the leading role of the helmsman, the ruler of the state. The other, the body politic, is less used today, but was equally current in antiquity. Though it, too, emphasizes the position of the head of the state, king or emperor, is also symbolized the interdependence of the different parts of the body politic for the well-being of the whole. Thus the organic conception of ὁμόνοια or *concordia* constituted the basic idea of the simile.

The idea of the body politic originated amidst the Greek political troubles of the 5th and 4th centuries B.C.¹ For the survival of the simile it was, however, of greater significance that the comparison was current in classical Roman literature and in the Bible. Cicero quotes it e.g. in *de off.* 1,85 and 3,22, Seneca in *de ira* 2,31,7 and *de clem.* 1,3,4. The most famous embodiment of the idea was the parable of the rebellion of the other parts of the body against the allegedly parasitic stomach by which Menenius Agrippa, consul in 503 B.C., was said to have persuaded the *plebs* to give up its secession and to return to the community. The story, such as it is told by Livy 2,32,8-12 and Dion. Hal. 6,86 is naturally of later and probably Greek origin.² In Livy, it was only the stomach that referred to a social order, the Senate, whereas in Dionysius specification was more detailed. He mentions

¹ A. Momigliano, "Camillus and Concord", *Classical Quarterly* 36, 1942, 117-18.

² W. Nestle, "Die Fabel des Menenius Agrippa", *Klio* 21, 1927, 350-60. R. Ogilvie, *A Commentary on Livy. Books 1-5.* 1965, 312-13.

the feet, hands, shoulders, mouth, and head as well as their political equivalents. The moral of the story, like that of the comparison in general, underlined the importance of *concordia*. In most references to the simile, it was usually only the *caput* and the *corpus* that were mentioned, the head and the mind of course being the leading organ, e.g. Cicero, Murena 51; Tacitus, ann. 1,12; Pliny the Younger, epist. 4,22,7 (cf. p. 77); Florus 2,14,5-6.

There was a related biological comparison which also has enjoyed considerable popularity up to the present day. The state was considered as a human being undergoing birth, growth, decay, and ultimately death. The idea had been voiced e.g. by Polybius,³ and it was already a commonplace in Roman literature, where its best-known exposition was found in Florus.⁴ He distinguished four biological periods in Roman history.

St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Corinthians 1,12,12-17, made use of the simile, which he had probably learnt from pagan literature, to illustrate the interdependence of the members of Christian community and the supremacy of the whole, which is the body of Christ.⁵

In the Middle Ages, the idea of the body politic was resuscitated, becoming even more popular than it had been in antiquity. With few exceptions – see Dion. Hal. above – the ancient writers did not specify the political equivalents of the different members of the human body. John of Salisbury, a representative of the 12th century Renaissance, in his *Policraticus*, a mirror for princes, quoted a letter of Plutarch to Emperor Trajan, 5,1-2, in which Plutarch allegedly compared the different organs of the body to the parts of the political community, the head, naturally, interpreted as the prince; the heart as the senate; the eyes, ears and tongue as judges and provincial governors; the hands as officials and soldiers; the sides as "people who always stand by the prince"; the stomach and intestines as questors and *commentarienses* and *comites rerum privatarum*, and the feet as farmers. The Epistle is spurious as far as it was attributed to Plutarch,⁶ but its real authorship is still undecided. It was formerly thought to have been an inven-

³ Polybius 6,4-10. F.W. Walbank, A Historical Commentary on Polybius 1, 1957, 645 records the prehistory of the idea in Greek thought.

⁴ Florus, Praef. 5-8. Cf. Paul Jal in his edition of Florus, 1967, lxx-lxxviii.

⁵ For interpretation of the passage, see e.g. John Ruef, Paul's First Letter to Corinth, 1971, 132-36.

⁶ K. Ziegler, "Plutarchos", RE 21, 1951, 824-25.

tion of John,⁷ but today most scholars hold that John had drawn upon a text originating from antiquity or the early Middle Ages. John, though, had reworked it.⁸ Thus references to the senate and especially to *comites rerum privatarum*⁹ suggest a source in late antiquity. On the other hand, there are clear indications of medieval additions. Contrary to the classical idea of the head, that is the prince, as the leading organ, John states that even as the soul holds supremacy in the body, similarly the prefects of religion are in command of the whole body politic. Further, even the prince is subject to God and his vicars.¹⁰ The assertion that the prince was subordinate to God or divine law, though specifically Christian, had already been articulated in late antiquity, but making the clerical order or the Pope, the Vicar of Christ, superior to the ruler, was a distinctly medieval view. But whether this insistence on the paramount importance of the soul is attributable to John or to a medieval source he made use of, is a moot problem. John himself admits that he had not quoted Plutarch's Epistle literally,¹¹ and he claims that he had expunged all that *ad idolatriae cultum pertinent*, that is, to pagan religion.

The organological comparison enjoyed great popularity in the Middle Ages and indeed survived to the 18th century.¹² A comprehensive study of the history of the body politic is, however, lacking. Struve attributes the popularity of the comparison to the fact that "eine eigenständige Terminologie zur Beschreibung der verschiedenartigen Phänomene politischer Ge-

⁷ R. Hirzel, Plutarch, 1912, 96-97; H. Liebeschütz, "John of Salisbury and Pseudo-Plutarch", Journal of the Warburg Institute 6, 1943, 33-39; Idem, Medieval Humanism in the Life and Writings of John of Salisbury, 1950, 24-25.

⁸ Tilman Struve, Die Entwicklung der organologischen Staatsauffassung im Mittelalter, 1978, 128; Idem, "Vita civilis naturam imitetur. Der Gedanke der Nachahmung der Natur als Grundlage der organologischen Staatskonzeption Johannes von Salisbury", Historisches Jahrbuch 101, 1981, 344-46; Max Kerner, "Die *Institutio Traiani* – spätantike Lehrschrift oder hochmittelalterliche Fiktion?", Monumenta Germaniae Historica. Schriften, Band 33 I, Fälschungen im Mittelalter I, 1988, 715-38.

⁹ For these officials, see RE 4, 1901, 664-70. The title came in use in the 4th century A.D.

¹⁰ Struve 1988 (n. 8) 357-58.

¹¹ Policraticus V,2a *ita tamen ut sententiarum vestigia potius imitarer quam passus verborum*; cf. 2d.

¹² E. Lewis, Medieval Political Ideas 1-2, 1954, see the Index on Organic Analogies; E.-E. Kantorowicz, The King's Two Bodies. A Study in Medieval Political Theology, 1957 (1981) 207-32; Struve 1978 (n. 8) 292.

meinschaften überhaupt fehlte".¹³ This deficiency was offset by deriving analogies and comparisons from the realm of organic nature. Though the argument no doubt is plausible, there may have been another reason, too. Greek and Latin writings, even philosophical discourses, were always heavily influenced by rhetoric. Comparison, *similitudo*, classified as a figure of thought, was a favorite means of conferring distinction upon discourse, rendering it ornate, embellishing it by variety.¹⁴ St. Paul, in comparing Christ to the body of believers, was no less under the influence of rhetoric than were the pagan authors, who symbolized the ruler as head and the people as body. The example of pagan and Christian writers, as well as the teachings of rhetoric, which had an entrenched position in medieval as well as humanist education, contributed to the survival of the idea of the body politic in post-classical literature. Thus, contrary to what Struve suggests, it was not the creation of a serviceable political terminology that made an end of the comparison in political debate. Rather, it went out of use simultaneously with the general discrediting of rhetoric in the Age of Enlightenment.

The Body Politic in Wexionius-Gyldenstolpe

In the political literature of the 16th and 17th centuries, the body politic was often little more than a hackneyed metaphor.¹⁵ The Political community consisted of "head" and "body", etc. But frequently the references were of greater significance. Thus Jean Bodin, 1530-1596, a leading theorist of royal absolutism, argued that the king was bound by natural law and fundamental customary law. Moreover, he had always to care for the welfare of his subjects. He once illustrated the concord which was essential for the maintenance of social order by quoting the image of the body, in which every member is equally important for the welfare of the whole, appropriately citing the Parable of Menenius Agrippa.¹⁶

These references to the comparison were, however, seldom as circumstantial as they were in John of Salisbury. But there were exceptions. One of

¹³ Struve 1978 (n. 8) 290.

¹⁴ Cf. Aristotle, rhet. 1393a27; Rhet. Herenn. 4,59.

¹⁵ H.A. Lloyd in J.H. Burns, ed. The Cambridge History of Political Thought 1450-1700, 1991, 274.

¹⁶ De republica libri, Latine ab auctore redditi, Francofurti 1627, 1099.

them was a professor at the provincial university of Turku in the 17th century, Michael Wexionius, and after his rise to nobility, Wexionius-Gyldenstolpe. Turku was the capital of Finland, which at that time belonged to Sweden. Despite his modest position, Wexionius-Gyldenstolpe was one of the leading writers in political philosophy in Sweden during its brief period as a great power.

The biography of Wexionius-Gyldenstolpe can be briefly related.¹⁷ He was a native Swede, born in 1608 in Småland to the family of a country pastor. After primary education at the Cathedral School of Växjö, he went to Uppsala in 1626, where Neo-Aristotelianism had by then triumphed. In 1631 he maintained his *pro gradu* dissertation *Positiones philosophicae*, which consisted of 18 *theoremata* of encyclopaedic character. Like most similar dissertations, it was unoriginal. That he was an Aristotelian is shown by the passages in which he supports his arguments by quoting the Stagirite. After graduation he went on *peregrinatio* to the war-ravaged Germany, where he studied at the University of Marburg, and further to the Netherlands, particularly to Leiden, where he met a few of the leading scholars of the age. After returning home, he was invited to take up the chair of moral philosophy and history at the newly founded University of Turku in 1640, the position which he vacated in 1657 after being appointed an Assessor or Councillor at the Court of Appeal (*hovrätt*) at Turku. He died in 1670. Throughout his career, he was a protégé of the Chancellor of the University, Count Per Brahe, a prominent member of the high aristocracy, a relationship which certainly influenced his political views.

Wexionius-Gyldenstolpe proved a conscientious and hard-working educator. He produced textbooks, originally published as series of dissertations, in all the branches of his academic position. As usual, they were mostly second-hand compilations, but useful for students in a small provincial university, in which books were rare and difficult to obtain.

One of these works was *Politica*, first edition in 1646, and a revised edition in 1657. As the sub-title states, the work was *ad modernum Sveo-Gothici Statum accommodata, domesticisque passim exemplis illustrata*. It was printed in octavo, and the final edition consisted of 660 pages. The first

¹⁷ A.A. Laitinen, Michael Wexionius-Gyldenstolpe, diss., Helsinki 1912 (in Finnish); N. Runeby, "Gyldenstolpe, Michael", *Svenskt biografiskt lexicon* 17, 1967-1969, 509-12; Kajanto, *Humanism in a Christian Society II. Classical Moral Philosophy and Oratory in Finland 1640-1713*, 1990, 37-55.

edition comprised 12, and the second 19 chapters, originally separate dissertations, which were supplemented by brief theses, *corollaria* or *sicillimenta*, debated by the respondents at a public disputation, where they otherwise had little to say about a dissertation which was wholly the work of the *praeses*, the Professor.

Unlike most other textbooks of Wexionius-Gyldenstolpe, his *Politica* has some claim to originality. Though the political ideas which he represented and to which I will presently return were largely derivative, illustrating and corroborating them by examples drawn from Swedish constitution and social organization was an exception to the usually theoretical discourses of political philosophers. Wexionius-Gyldenstolpe's *Politica* indeed gives a good overview of the Swedish state and society in the mid-17th century. Swedish Law, especially *Konungabalken* or the part of the law defining the rights and duties of the king, and the *Regeringsform* or the Constitution of 1634, were frequently quoted, even more frequently than the Old Testament, which was otherwise one of Wexionius-Gyldenstolpe's main frames of reference. Other branches of the Swedish Law, the decrees of the King and of the Estates were equally often quoted, and Swedish history was drawn upon for examples.¹⁸

In his political views, Wexionius was an advocate of a mixed constitution. The idea that the best constitution combined the elements of monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy was well-known from classical literature, especially from Aristotle, though he in his theoretical discussion mixed only aristocracy and democracy,¹⁹ and from Polybius, who saw mixed constitu-

¹⁸ In *Politica*, there are about 80 quotations from or references to the *Konungabalken* and 43 to *Regeringsform*. The corresponding figures for the Old Testament were about 70, and to the New Testament 30. The preponderance of the Old over the New Testament was characteristic of the age of Lutheran Orthodoxy. The most often quoted political philosophers were Johannes Althusius: 54 references; Christoph Besold: 42; Jean Bodin: 54; Giovanni Botero: 38; Machiavelli (only *De arte belli*): 22; Daniel Otto: 21, and Theodor Reinking: 32. The most often cited ancient author was Tacitus, about 30 mentions, while Aristotle had only 11, Cicero and Florus 10 each, Plato eight, Sallust five and Vegetius most of all, 17 references. With one exception, all the quotations from Vegetius were found in Chapters 17-18, which dealt with war and armies. Vegetius was still considered an authority in military matters. The popularity of Tacitus in the 17th century, especially in political literature, is well-known, see Peter Burke, "Tacitism, Scepticism, and Reason of State". in Burns 1991 (n. 15) 485-90. Besold, Reinking and Otto were contemporary German political philosophers.

¹⁹ Aristotle, pol. 1295a25-1296b12. He prefers a mixed constitution because it represents the mean, and the mean is always the best. The middle class, who are neither rich

tion realized in the Roman republic.²⁰ In Sweden, prior to the brief period of royal absolutism at the end of the seventeenth century, mixed constitution almost had the status of official political philosophy.²¹ The Introduction to the Constitution of 1634 praised the Swedish state as one "där konungen sin höghet, rådet sin myndighet och ständerne deres skälige rätt och frihet tillbörligen blefve behållen."²² This *ingress* is said to reflect the views of the leading statesman of the age, Axel Oxenstierna.²³

In the Statutes of the University of Uppsala from 1626, which were also observed at Turku, the Professor of Practical Philosophy had to teach politics according to Althusius or Golius.²⁴ The latter was an insignificant commentator of Aristotle, today forgotten, and not referred to by Wexionius,²⁵ while Calvinist Althusius, 1557-1638, was one of the most influential political philosophers of the age.²⁶ Disregarding other aspects of his political thought, what is relevant here is his assertion that sovereignty originally belongs to the people. Though the people entrust the task of administration to the king, they retain their original sovereignty and, if the king turn into a tyrant, they have a right to depose him.²⁷ Moreover, there were a number of "ephors", who controlled the constitutionality of the king's decrees. The constitution devised by Althusius was mixed, which he illustrates by drawing upon the image of the mixture of the four humors:

recte dicimus, temperatam & mixtam esse quamvis reipublicae speciem, uti hominis complexio ex quatuor... humoribus est temperata. Sic enim quod est monarchicum in Republica, continet in officio, &

nor poor, are the best guarantees of a mixed constitution. There are, however, few historical examples of states which would have had this type of constitution. In another connection he mentions Sparta and Carthage, 1265b30 and 1272b24, though in the constitutions of these city states there was a monarchical element, too.

²⁰ Polybius 6,43-56; cf. Walbank (n. 3) 639-41.

²¹ Nils Runeby, *Monarchia mixta. Maktfördelningsdebatt i Sverige under den tidigare stormaktstiden*, 1962, 25ff.

²² *Sveriges regeringsformer 1634-1806*, utgifne af Emil Hildebrand, 1891, 2.

²³ H. Hjärke, *Från Vasatiden till Frihetstiden*, 1929, 43-45.

²⁴ Cl. Annerstedt, *Uppsala universitets historia*. Bihang 1, 1877, 278.

²⁵ Theophilus Golius, a Catholic, author of *Epitome doctrinae politicae ex octo libris Aristotelis collecta*, Argentorati 1622.

²⁶ See Lloyd (n. 15) 287-92.

²⁷ *Politica methodice digesta*, 1614 (1981) Cap. XIX.

*conservat id, quod est Aristocraticum & Democraticum, & id quod est Aristocraticum & Democraticum in officio continet & cohibet quod est Monarchicum. Quae temperatura est optima & diuturnitati conveniens.*²⁸

Thus, checks and balances were of necessity for a healthy state.

At Uppsala, during Wexionius's student days, this philosophy was advocated by Jonas Magni, with the surname of Wexionensis, 1583-1651, Professor of Moral Philosophy 1614-1620, of History 1620-1624, and of Theology 1626-1640.²⁹ In political philosophy, his main work was a series of dissertations, *Philosophiae civilis pars posterior seu specialis*, 1624-1625. In Diss. III, with the son of Axel Oxenstierna, Gustavus Axelii, as respondent, Jonas Magni discussed *respublica mixta*. Though he otherwise followed Justus Lipsius, a savant of great fame in the early seventeenth century, here he argues against him. While Lipsius holds that *legitima monarchia* was the best form of government, Jonas Magni argues that because power always corrupts, and moreover, to find a thoroughly good man for a ruler may be arduous, the state will be more stable if the power of the ruler be limited. After that, he quotes the theory of mixed constitution, which clearly derives from the passage of Althusius quoted above:

*Ut enim fervor cholerae a phlegmate temperatur, & sanguinis concitatio a Melancholia cohibetur, ita ut unus humor sit alterius conservatio, non aliter in Repub(lica) cunctos παρεκβάσεις opposito aliarum formarum temperamento cohiberi posse videatur.*³⁰

Wexionius discussed the different forms of government in Ch. 2, which with its 41 pages is the longest in his *Politica*.³¹ In the edition of 1657 the chapter had been greatly expanded, but the basic ideas remained unaltered. Taking his departure from the debate on the best form of government in Herodotus 3,80-83, he first surveys the three traditional constitutions, democracy, aristocracy, and monarchy, scrutinizing their strengths and

²⁸ Ibid. Cap. XXXIX.15.

²⁹ Nils Runeby (n. 21) 154-71; Idem, *Svenskt biografiskt lexicon* 20, 1973-1975, 369-71.

³⁰ Op. cit, Thesis 36, with references to Aristotle, pol. 3,6 and Althusius, Cap. XXXIX.

³¹ Cf. Runeby (n. 21) 391-404.

weaknesses. Democracy guarantees equality, in which there is no place for ambition and envy. Nevertheless, in democracy there have been great heroes in war no less than in arts. Above all, democracy favors freedom. He mentions as examples Athens, Rome, Switzerland, and Netherlands. But all these arguments are fragile. There is no equality in nature, one is born to command, the other to obey; democracy raises the wicked and downgrades the good men; the people are easily corrupted; it is difficult to govern a *bestia multorum capitum*, especially in direct democracy; finally, democracy resembles anarchy and fosters dissensions, secessions, and disorders.³²

Aristocracy is similarly discussed pro et contra. Power has to be given to the most worthy, but they are always a minority; because the rich have a bigger stake in the welfare of the state, they govern it better; a number of good men more readily than a single one invent good counsel and are better equipped to bear the burden of government. On the other hand, among the worthy one is always worthier than the others; the poor have an equal stake in public welfare, and a monarch most of all; it is equally difficult to find a number of good men than a single one. From Bodin he quotes a few other objections: the more rulers there are, the greater the confusion in decision-making; the people always hate aristocracy, and internally discordant *optimates* have a laborious task to stave off their assaults. Still, Wexionius prefers aristocratic government to democracy as more bearable, equable, and stable.³³

There can be no doubt that of the three forms of government Wexionius opts in favor of monarchy.³⁴ Whereas in discussing democracy and aristocracy, he first surveys the arguments in favor and then refutes them, here he first records the arguments which speak against monarchy, such as dissensions springing from elective or contested hereditary kingship and the vices of a king, which may be difficult to forestall. Wexionius discounts these objections. Even in elective kingship there are fewer contentions than there are in polyarchy about the election of magistrates; the vices of the future ruler must be precluded by careful education and by invoking the aid of God, with the tell-tale addition: *quantum fieri potest*. But the arguments which favor monarchy are more numerous and weightier. The first of them are derived from scholastic philosophy. He cites the example of *natura*

³² Wexionius 1646: Theses 7-9; 1657: pp. 90-99.

³³ Ibid., Theses 10-12 and 1657: pp. 99-104.

³⁴ Ibid., Theses 13-14 and 1657: pp. 104-108.

naturans: there is only one God, and of *natura naturata*: in macrocosm there is one sun; social animals like bees and sheep have only one leader; in microcosm or the human body the head is superior to the other members. Further, God himself gave his chosen people one judge, leader, and king; in the household there is one leader, *paterfamilias*; the example of almost all the nations points to monarchy; monarchy is more expedient in decision-making, it guarantees unity and hence strength, and it is more durable.

Wexionius does not, for all that, maintain that monarchy would be the most perfect form of government: *verum in hac corrupta natura, ut nullum purum elementum, nullum purum temperamentum, ita nec ulla reip(ublicae) forma pure simplex per omnia laudabilis et permanens inveniri potest*,³⁵ an assertion which combines the Christian idea of nature corrupted by the Fall with the ancient doctrine of the mixture of the elements. After summing up the pros and cons of the three constitutions, he states that different forms suit different peoples, but concludes:

*Sed palmam omnibus praeripere statum ex omnibus contemperatum (scil., constat); ubi Rex ab insidijs & subditi ab oppressione & violentia sunt tutiores; Dum simul Monarcae majestas, Optimatum auctoritas, & libertas populi asseruntur.*³⁶

which clearly echoes the passage in the Introduction to the Constitution of 1634 which I have quoted on p. 55.

Throughout *Politica*, the idea of mixed constitution is patent. Though the monarch possesses the supreme power and can even be considered the Vicar of Christ, he is not above divine and natural law, not even the civil law except in a public emergency. Hence, the king cannot without a lawful cause deprive his subjects of their possessions.³⁷ Wexionius takes a very cautious stance on one of the most debated questions of contemporary political philosophy, the right to depose a king who had infringed the fundamental laws and become a tyrant.³⁸ He refers to Althusius and Reinking and

³⁵ Wexionius 1657: 108-109, with references to Althusius, loc. cit. (n. 28 above).

³⁶ Ibid. 110.

³⁷ Ibid. 179.

³⁸ Wexionius 1657: 160. See Quentin Skinner, *The Foundations of Modern Political Thought 2. The Age of Reformation*, 1978 (1992), 189ff. The right to resist was especially a Calvinist doctrine whereas the Lutherans had originally advocated the idea that a

others, but adds: *caute hic omnino agendum, & defensive, potius quam offensive*. But even in this guarded form, Wexionius's idea about monarchy was far from absolutism.

Wexionius's most famous doctrine was his division of the subjects into *mixti*, who had some share in power, and into *mere subditi*, who had only to obey.³⁹ The former group comprised nobility, the clergy and the *literati*, the learned class. Besides *subditi mixti*, he also used the term *subditi immediati*: because of their social position, there was no intervening authority between them and the king. *Subditi mediati*, on the other hand, had an *intermedius dominus*, for example the tenant-farmers of noblemen.⁴⁰

In the age of increasing absolutism, Wexionius's doctrine of *subditi mixti* met royal disapproval. Though the stories of the prohibition of the book are untrue,⁴¹ Wexionius's Correspondence with his son Nils shows that King Carolus X was not altogether satisfied with it.⁴²

* * *

Considering that mixed constitution was the leading idea of *Politica*, the importance Wexionius attached to the body politic becomes understandable. The interdependence and indispensability of all the parts of the *corpus mysticum* or *politicum*, which did not jeopardize the leading position of the head, were the salient features of the comparison. It accordingly suited the

tyrant is not to be resisted but to be endured. Later, though, they too took a more radical view on the right to disobey.

³⁹ Wexionius 1657, 224: *distinctio, nostro statui maxime conveniens, subditorum in Mixtos, qui potestatis alicuius sunt participes, publicum aliquod munus gerentes, et Meros ac privatos, qui semper & tantum parent*. Wexionius had obtained the doctrine from Laurentius Paulinus Gothus, 1565-1640, Professor, Bishop, and Archbishop, to whose *Historia Arctoa* he duly refers on p. 225; cf. Runeby (n. 21) 400. Wexionius, however, made it more widely known, with some unpleasant consequences, for which see below n. 42.

⁴⁰ Op. cit. 221.

⁴¹ Samuel J. Alander et Petrus Kindahl, *Historia librorum prohibitorum in Svecia*, diss. Uppsal. 1764, 14-15, referring to A.A. von Stiernman, *Bibliotheca Sviogothica* 2, 559-66.

⁴² Wexionius's letter to his son Nils, dated 9.1. 1662, reveals that Per Brahe had secretly divulged to Nils that the king had upbraided the *Politica*, which Count Brahe had then defended, and he asked his son to enquire *quaenam... punta sive momenta* had met with the king's disapproval, unpublished letter at the University Library of Upsala, Nord. Saml. 468 No 55. Unfortunately, the letter Nils sent to his father has vanished.

idea of mixed constitution, in which the harmonious cooperation of all the social orders was essential.

The main features of the comparison were already present in the first edition in 1646. The edition of 1657 added new details, examples, and quotations, greatly expanding the text, which in the former edition comprised only eight pages, and in the latter as many as 28, both in 8vo. Before subjecting Wexionius's idea of the body politic to a detailed analysis, I will tabulate his presentation of it as it is found in the edition of 1657. The organs marked by an asterisk were lacking in the first edition.

THE BODY POLITIC IN WEXIONIUS-GYLDENSTOLPE

Organ of the body	Equivalent in the state
CAPUT	REX
cerebrum	sapientia, prudentia
*sensus interni:	
*sensus communis	publicorum negotiorum perceptio et observantia
*phantasia	dijudicatio et consultatio
*memoria	acta publica
sensus externi:	
oculus et visus	publicae utilitatis provisio
aures et auditus	clementia et pressis succurrendi promptitudo
nares et odoratus	imminentis periculi observatio et aversio
lingua et gustus	variorum idiomatum peritia et commoditatum exploratio
tactus	libertatis (1646: et honoris) stimuli
COLLUM	mutua benevolentia inter regem et subditos
INTERIORES CAVITATES	
cor: fons vitalium spirituum	justitiae collegium
epur: sanguinis praeparatio	militare collegium

lien: pituita	ammiralitas
pulmones: respiratio	cancellaria
renes: liquores	aerarium
praecordia et diaphragma: sejun- gunt principalia membra a re- liquis	suprema imperii membra, quae ho- noribus et privilegiis distin- guuntur
COSTAE	arces etc. quae regnum firmant
STOMACHUS	aerarium, fiscus
TRIPLEX CONCOCTIO	triplex instantia (<i>process</i>) in omni collegio
BRACCHIA, MANUS	mechanici, artifices, milites
*HUMERI, DORSUM	mere subditi, mercenarii, plebs
VIS GENERATIONIS, LUMBUS	oeconomia, conjugium
*UNGUES	chirurgi, tonsores, <i>servants of just- ice</i>
CRURA, PEDES	agricultura, mercatura
OSSA	nobilitas
CARTILAGO	literati
CARO	plebs
NERVI	proemia et poenae, mutuus amor et fides
QUATUOR HUMORES	quatuor ordines: politicus, ecclesi- asticus, militaris, oeconomicus
flava bilis: animosi, insomnes	magistratus
melancholia: cogitabundi, severi	clerici
pituita: tardi, hebetiores	milites gregarii
sanguis: copia excellit	plebs
SPIRITUS VITALES	literae
ANIMA	leges et jura
intellectus	imperium regium
voluntas	mixti subditi
sensitivus appetitus	mere subditi
SCIPIO, FULCRA: ad corpus sta- biliendum	religio et justitia, confoederati, le- gati
MORBI	<i>no details</i>

In the edition of 1646 Wexionius did not cite any authors, but in 1657 he ends his survey of the body politic by remarking that other learned and wise men had made the same comparison. He quotes Plutarch's Epistle to Trajan (see above p. 50) but does not quote the text from John of Salisbury. Instead he borrowed it from Antonio de Guevara's *Horologium principum*, the Latin translation, in 1632, of his Spanish *Relox de principes*, first published in 1529.⁴³ Although Guevara alleges to quote Plutarch's Epistle, which was only known from John of Salisbury, his description of the body politic is conspicuously unlike John's (see p. 50 above).⁴⁴ To make the differences clearer, I will tabulate the structure of the body politic in Guevara

Head = prince, the holder of supreme power

Eyes = the good men whose guidance we follow

Ears = subjects, who do what they have been ordered to

Tongue = the erudite men, from whom we learn the laws and disciplines

Hairs hanging from the head = the oppressed, who implore the king's aid

Hands = the nobles, who defeat the enemy

Feet = the peasants

Bones = the wise men, who bear the burden of the state

Heart = secret counselors

Neck = mutual love between king and subjects, which holds the state together

Soul, and consequently the clerical order, who according to John possess primacy in the state, is lacking. Only head and feet are similar to John's comparison, but the head's or the prince's subservience to God and the Vicar of Christ goes unmentioned. Hairs, bones, and neck were not found in John, and the remaining organs have very different equivalents in the body politic of Guevara.

Guevara, then, considerably altered John's text, no doubt in order to

⁴³ Wexionius 1657, 27-28. For Guevara, see Luis Alborg, *Historia de la literatura española* 1, 1972, 726-29. *Relox de principes* has recently been edited by Emilio Blanco, *Escritores franciscanos españoles* 1, 1994. The expanded Latin translation which I have used was done by Johannes Wancrelius, *editio sexta*, Lipsiae 1632.

⁴⁴ Lib. I Cap. XXXVI in the Latin translation; Blanco's edition, 281-87.

make it correspond to new social and political realities.⁴⁵ In John, Plutarch's comparisons suggest circumstances in the Late Roman Empire whereas in Guevara they reflect conditions in the Early Modern Age. In John, the heart corresponds to the senate, and in Guevara to the secret counselors of the king.⁴⁶ Hands, which in John symbolize *officiales* and *milites*, now represent *equites et nobiles* or *cavalleros* in the original Spanish, etc.

Although Wexionius does not expressly say that he had taken Guevara for his model, his dependence upon the Spanish bishop is evident from the fact, too, that most of the other authors he records as making use of the same comparison were borrowed from the marginal notes in the Latin translation of Guevara:⁴⁷ Tacitus, ann. 1,12; Chrysostomus, homil. 10; Cassiodorus, epist. 17; Apuleius, apol. 50; John of Salisbury, Polic. 6,10; Aristotle, pol. 3,16. Only the references to Ulpian 1,25ff., Althusius 2,35 and St Paul, Rom. 12,4-5 were not found in the *Horologium*. This work was well-known to Wexionius for also he quoted it in his ethical treatise.⁴⁸ Moreover, as elsewhere in contemporary Europe, Guevara was a popular writer in Sweden.⁴⁹

But though Wexionius probably followed Guevara, his body politic was very different and in all likelihood largely his own invention. As I have remarked, his "body" was greatly more detailed. Besides anatomy, he also considered physiology. Above all, his body politic was unmistakably applied to the Swedish constitution and the contemporary Swedish state. His very words in which he apologizes for his bold use of the metaphor by mentioning that others, too, had made use of it, also suggest that he had himself devised the elaborate comparisons.⁵⁰

Because of the detailed description of the anatomy and physiology of the human body, the source he used here is of special interest. At this time, in medicine the Galenic school was paramount. In the analysis of the separate parts of the body I will show that the physiological doctrine he pre-

⁴⁵ Cf. Hirzel (n. 7), note, and Blanco 1994, 283, note.

⁴⁶ In original Spanish, *los privados*, and in the Latin translation *familiares intimi*.

⁴⁷ See n. 43 above.

⁴⁸ Kajanto 1990 (n. 17) 42, 43, 105 n. 39.

⁴⁹ See Carlo Claveria, "Guevara in Suecia." *Revista de Filología Española* 26, 1942, 22-48 and 28, 1944, 83-84.

⁵⁰ Wexionius 1657, 26 *Coronidis loco notetur, alijs quoque viris doctis ac prudentibus hanc imperij cum humani corporis mole collationem etiam olim arrisisse.*

sented was mainly Galenic. The Greek *editio princeps* of Galen had been published in 1525 but was unknown at Turku. A Latin translation which had appeared in 1561-1562 was found there, but it is uncertain whether Wexionius consulted these big volumes for his description of the human body.⁵¹ He may as well have obtained his information from some contemporary textbook. But he does not seem to have gone to great lengths in these studies. As will be shown below, some of the facts about human anatomy and physiology he records were at variance with established Galenic doctrine.

* * *

Although Aristotle had argued that the heart was the seat of the soul, Galen and other authoritative ancient medical writers correctly located the governance of man in the head.⁵² Hence it was natural to equate the head with the king. In both his 1646 and 1657 editions Wexionius writes that even as the head is the noblest and highest placed organ, the leader and lodestar of the lower members, in the body politic the king is the highest member and the ruler of the others.⁵³ The edition of 1646 records as parts of the head the brain and the five senses, but in 1657 the list was expanded by the addition of three internal senses.

The idea of the **internal senses** derived from scholastic philosophy, which had received it from the Arab writers, who in turn were indebted to Aristotle.⁵⁴ The internal senses were organic, separate from the immaterial soul, and common to men and animals. Their number and nomenclature

⁵¹ J. Vallinkoski, *The History of the University Library at Turku 1, 1640-1722*, 1948, 115 mentions that Hippocrates and Paracelsus were among the more than one thousand works donated by Christina Horn, General Torsten Ståhlhandske's widow, as war booty to the University Library in 1646. Vallinkoski does not say whether Galen's Greek or Latin edition was meant, but H.G. Porthan, *Historia bibliothecae regiae academiae aboensis*, 1776, 254 (*Opera omnia* V, 1974, 293) states that Galen was represented in Latin translation.

⁵² Galen, *On the Usefulness of the Parts of the Body*. Translated from the Greek with an Introduction and Commentary by Margaret T. May, 1-2, 1968, 62-64.

⁵³ Wexionius 1646, A2v; 1657 p. 1.

⁵⁴ E. Ruth Harvey, *The Inward Wits. Psychological Theory in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance*. Warburg Institute Surveys 6, 1975; Katharine Park, "The Organic Soul", in: Ch. Schmitt and Quentin Skinner, ed., *The Cambridge History of Renaissance Philosophy*, 1988, 465-71. Aristotle especially dealt with the common sense, see J. van Eijk, *Aristoteles, Parva naturalia*, 1994, 77-80.

varied, but there were usually five of them. *Sensus communis* compares and evaluates the external sense data, *imaginatio* stores them, *phantasia* produces new combinations, *aestimatio* concludes on the basis of sense data what to avoid and what to trust, and *memoria* stores, besides sense data, also the products of phantasy and estimation. But the number could also be reduced to a mere three. Thus Melanchthon, arguing that he was following Galen, listed *sensus communis*, *cogitatio seu comparatio*, and *memoria*. His words, however, suggest that *cogitatio* and *comparatio* corresponded to *aestimatio* in the fuller list.⁵⁵

In Wexionius what he calls *phantasia* clearly agrees with *aestimatio* whereas *imaginatio* and *memoria* had been combined. *Cerebrum* was not included in the internal senses. Its general function consisted in *cogitatio*, which was sometimes counted as an internal sense.⁵⁶ I cannot tell from which source Wexionius had taken his classification. With the exception of the different name for *phantasia*, his group coincides with that of Melanchthon, which of course does not prove that he had directly drawn upon the great Wittenbergian.

In the body politic these organs of the head stood for princely or royal virtues. Since antiquity, panegyrists and writers of mirrors for princes had drawn up lists of them.⁵⁷ In Ch. 4, On Royal Virtues, Wexionius divides these virtues into general ethical and special royal virtues.⁵⁸ The former include *pietas* or inner faith and *religio* or the observance of religious rites; justice; courage; *temperantia*, with Caesar and Augustus as examples; generosity; *mansuetudo*, and love of peace. The author stresses that both the Bible and *sanior philosophia* or the pagan philosophers, such as Aristotle, acknowledged by Christianity, prescribe these virtues. After recording the vices contrary to these virtues he comes to the special royal virtues. The two first of them stress the crucial idea of the duty of the king to look after the

⁵⁵ De anima, in: Corpus Reformatorum 13, 1846, 120.

⁵⁶ Harvey (n. 54) 2; Park (ibid.) 466.

⁵⁷ The literature on the subject is vast. For antiquity, the best general survey is P. Hadot, "Fürstenspiegel". RLAC 8, 1972, 555-632; for the Middle Ages, W. Berges, Die Fürstenspiegel des hohen und späten Mittelalters, 1938; for the Renaissance, see A.H. Gilbert, Machiavelli's Prince and its Forerunners, 1938, 3-14; Quentin Skinner (n. 38) 1. The Renaissance, 1978 (1990) 125-28. I have discussed princely or royal virtues in my two studies of the panegyrics on Queen Christina, Christina heroína, 1993, and "Queen Christina in Latin Panegyrics". Acta conventus neo-Latini Hafniensis, 1994, 43-59.

⁵⁸ Wexionius 1657, 165-76.

welfare of his subjects and to show love and benevolence towards them. The king should not be a tyrant or a despot. Friendliness and affability were related virtues. In the third place Wexionius mentions clemency, which is indeed a royal virtue *par excellence*, but it should be tempered with strict observance of justice. The fourth virtue, *magnificentia*, is cognate with *liberalitas* recorded among the general ethical virtues but suggests generosity on a royal scale. Finally, kings should always keep their word, to evidence *sancta et intemerata fides*.

The virtues listed above were all ethical, either general or peculiar to princes. The Neo-Aristotelian moral philosophy current in the seventeenth century and represented by Wexionius, recognized special intellectual virtues, too, wisdom and prudence. He argues that the king should excel in all branches of learning, even giving practical advice how, and what, a king should learn.⁵⁹ For a king, however, prudence is the most imperative virtue.⁶⁰

It was not feasible to make all these virtues correspond to an organ in the head. Most of the comparisons concern practical wisdom. The brain itself, appropriately, represents *sapientia* and *prudentia*. The latter is further specified by stating that it is both personal and *mutuata*, borrowed, and the edition of 1657 clarifies the latter term by mentioning that it is obtained from counselors and faithful advisors.⁶¹

Sensus communis, which in the human body coordinates the different sense data, in the body politic watches the development of the public events, while *phantasia* is occupied in making plans and decisions. *Memoria*, though, does not represent a royal virtue or quality at all. It corresponds to

⁵⁹ Ibid. 173-74. Wexionius, however, qualifies the requirement by saying that the king should not immerse himself in learning, but only to have a taste of it. Lipsius, *Politica*, in *Opera omnia* 4, 1675, Lib. II Cap. XVII, also warns that a king should pursue learning only so far as it is of use to him; learning may even be enervating.

⁶⁰ Contemporary political philosophers had made prudence the leading princely virtue. Lipsius (n. 59) Lib. I Cap. VII defines *prudentia* as *virtutis rector* and as *intellectus* and *delectus rerum, quae publice privatimque fugiendae aut appetendae* (scil., *sunt*). Again, Cap. VIII: it is to be acquired from *usus*, experience, and from *memoria*, from reading history, that is, from the experience of others. Lib. II Cap. VII he claims that *prudentia* and *virtus* make a perfect prince. Althusius (n. 27) 397-98 similarly maintains that political prudence is a necessary prerequisite of administration. It consists in understanding and doing what is to be done or omitted, being based upon learning from the past and judicious application of its lessons.

⁶¹ Wexionius 1657, 2; cf. the preceding note.

the public archives, an almost self-evident comparison.

The five **external senses** were found in both editions with only minimal differences, but because of the addition of the internal senses in the new edition there was now some overlapping. The eyes as taking care of general welfare and the sense of smell as foreseeing and preventing imminent dangers, together with the aforementioned duty of the common sense, clearly symbolize the first special duty of a ruler, *sollicita reipublicae cura*. But *phantasia* arguably also belongs to the same group of royal virtues. In sum, to keep a keen eye on public affairs, to look after the welfare and security of the people, and to take judicious action for these ends, were the primary duties of the prince.

Only two other virtues and qualities were left. The sense of hearing is related to the king's mercifulness and readiness to help the oppressed, which is a natural comparison as the king hears complaints and cries for help. The use Wexionius made of the tongue and the sense of taste is somewhat less fortunate. Tongue, the organ of speech, represents one part of the king's intellectual virtues, his knowledge of foreign languages. In 1657, the addition of looking for possible new advantages, which corresponds to the sense of taste, in effect agrees with the function of the eyes in the body politic.

The sense of touch, which is spread throughout the body, symbolizes a political virtue in the whole body politic, freedom, which all the citizens, high and low alike, love and protect. In the edition of 1657, Wexionius further accentuated the importance he laid upon political freedom. Freedom, which primarily means freedom from despotism and tyranny, was one of the crucial ideas of Wexionius's political thought. Naturally enough, he argued that it had been realized in the Swedish state. It is especially in the chapter on *Comitia (riksdag)*, that he praises the benefits of freedom.⁶² To be possessed of the right to give advice, to be heard, to vote, was a great proof of freedom. Citing Althusius he contends that the mere possibility of freely giving one's opinion arouses fear in over-ambitious people but makes the people love their king.⁶³ Although Wexionius was a champion of the nobility and a protégé of the great Count Brahe, he did not show any desire to curtail the traditional freedom of the people

⁶² Ibid. 447, *Sicilimenta* 1: *Magnum est libertatis argumentum, consilia communicare posse, audiri et suffragium habere.*

⁶³ Loc. cit.: *Libere audiri, potentiam ambientibus timorem, plebi vero amorem erga regem conciliat.*

The **neck** symbolized another pivotal political idea, the mutual benevolence and affection between the king and his subjects, which indissolubly unites and bonds them together. In the Chapter on Royal Virtues (see above p. 65) Wexionius recorded it as a special virtue. That the ruler should make himself beloved of his subjects had been a traditional topos in the mirrors for princes and similar treatises since antiquity.⁶⁴

The **internal organs** represented the five *collegia*, offices or bureaus, which in a centralized state like Sweden controlled the administration of the country. In the 1646 edition, these bodily organs were simply listed: *cor, hepar, lien, pulmones, renes*. In both editions, the general function of these organs consisted in the generation of the vital spirit as well as in digestion and in discharge of excreta. In the 1657 edition, which I will follow here, the functions of the organs were detailed.⁶⁵

The heart was the source of vital spirit or *pneuma*, which ultimately made the body animate. Posterity inherited the doctrine of *pneuma* from Galen, who in turn was heavily indebted to the Alexandrian school of medicine and to Stoicism.⁶⁶ Vital spirit was prepared in the heart from a mixture of air and blood. It is thus material, though of very fine texture. Besides vital spirit, there was another variety, animal spirit, of the subtlest kind of matter. In his *De anima*, Melanchthon summarized the doctrine: *spiritus est subtilis vapor ex sanguine coctus virtute cordis*. There were two species of spirit. One was *spiritus vitalis*, which carried vital warmth through the arteries to the other members, the other *spiritus animalis*. It originated from vital spirit carried to the brain, which made it *lucidior* and spread it *velut lumen* through the nervous system to produce sensation and motion.⁶⁷ Wexionius does not mention animal spirit at all (see below p. 76). In the present passage, the idea of the physiology of vital spirit was traditional: it imbued the whole body with life.

The **heart**, the source of vital spirit, is likened to *justitiae collegium* or to the Supreme Court, the Court of Appeal (*Svea hovrätt*) in Stockholm. If administration of justice be suspended, only a disfigured corpse is left. Here vital spirit, then, symbolized justice.

⁶⁴ Cf. Lipsius (n. 59) Lib. III Cap. VIII on mutual *benevolentia* between king and subjects and the means whereby it is acquired.

⁶⁵ Wexionius 1657, 3-6.

⁶⁶ Galen/May (n. 52) 46-48; Harvey (n. 54) 7.

⁶⁷ Op. cit. (n. 55) 88.

The political analogies to the other internal organs were based upon more external similarities. The **liver** was from ancient times thought to be the seat of the production of blood.⁶⁸ Wexionius accordingly compared to it *militare collegium* or *arméförvaltningen*, which was occupied with the blood of criminals and enemies. In regard to the **spleen** he somewhat deviated from the established Galenic physiology. Galen taught that the spleen attracts and purifies the impurities left in blood prepared in the liver⁶⁹ whereas Wexionius states that the spleen *pituitam in corpore attrahit ac ciet*. Now *pituita* is another name for phlegm, one of the four humors.⁷⁰ Hence he draws a comparison to *maris pituita et fluctus*, the field of operation of the Admiralty. Next, the **lungs**, which temper the excessive heat of the heart,⁷¹ are compared to the Chancellery (*kansliet*), the leading college, which similarly mitigates excessive severity. This reference to the function of the Chancellery, which in fact was an equivalent of modern Home and Foreign Offices, is not quite appropriate. However, he seems to have meant that the Chancellery should take care of the smooth and equable operating of administration. Finally, the **kidneys**, occupied with the attraction and discharge of fluids,⁷² are compared to the Treasury (*kammaren*), which collects the revenues and distributes them duly and justly at the order of the King.

The men in charge of these colleges, members of the high nobility, give secret advice to the king, hidden from public view as if *intra prae-cordia*. Even as the main organs of the body are separated from the other members by the **midriff** and **diaphragm**, these high members of the state are distinguished from the lower ones by honors and privileges, a telling expression of Wexionius's hierarchical social views.

Making the **ribs** analogous to the fortresses and munitions and natural barriers of the state was rather self-evident. But discussing the **stomach** he was inconsistent. Although he had already compared the Treasury to the kidneys, he now compares it to the stomach, which receives necessary vict-

⁶⁸ Galen/May (n. 52) 53-54.

⁶⁹ Op. cit., Introduction 54 and text 4,15 (Helmreich's edition I 231-32).

⁷⁰ Cf. Melanchthon (n. 55) 81 for this variety of names.

⁷¹ The idea originated from Plato's Timaeus 70d, his one work in natural philosophy, but it was Galen who bequeathed the idea to posterity, May/Galen 390 (Helmreich I 450). Wexionius 1657, 5 *aeremque frigidiorē attrahentes nimium cordis fervorem mitigant atque refrigerant*.

⁷² May/Galen (n. 52) 54; Galen, On the Natural Faculties 1,12 and 15.

uals and conveys sustenance to the other members.⁷³ Wexionius no doubt wanted to include all the parts of the human body in his *corpus politicum*. Hence he had difficulties in finding suitable equivalents for all of them, which then resulted in some overlapping (see pp. 67 and 75).

In the edition of 1646 Wexionius briefly mentions that the three stages of **digestion** correspond to the triple procedure in the colleges. This somewhat obscure statement was greatly expanded in the new edition. Here he drew upon the description of the digestive system in Galenic physiology.⁷⁴ According to Galen, food is first elaborated in the stomach into chyle. From there the veins carry chyle to the liver, giving it a preliminary preparation. The liver, finishing the elaboration, turns chyle into blood. Wexionius largely followed this generally accepted explanation of digestion, even using Greek terms, but was not quite accurate, probably because of insufficient study of natural philosophy.⁷⁵ The first phase is χύλωσις when the nutriment chewed in the mouth is digested (*coctus*) in the stomach. Χύλωσις literally means "converting into chyle", which, as we have seen, agrees with the Galenic doctrine. The next stage in Wexionius is called χύμωσις. The nutriment digested in the stomach is carried through mesenteric veins to the liver, where it is converted into chyle. But, on one hand, χύλωσις and χύμωσις were synonyms, on the other, standard Galenic physiology placed this phase in the stomach. Wexionius, it is true, adds: "it is also called αϊμόπωσις", that is *sanguificatio* or converting into blood, which is the correct Galenic doctrine. According to Wexionius, the third phase, the final coction or elaboration takes place in the veins, whereas Galen attributes the final purification of blood to the kidneys.⁷⁶ Wexionius's description of the system of digestion is, then, somewhat sketchy and inaccurate. But *Politica* was not a work in natural philosophy. His purpose was to find analogical processes in the *corpus politicum*. This he indeed does in regard to all the *collegia* discussed above. Thus, lawsuits are first handled in the Rural District Court (*judex territorialis*, *häradshövding*), then in the Provincial Court (*lagman*), and finally, in important cases, in the Royal Court of Appeal (*hovrätt*). A similar triple procedure was observed in the other colleges, even in the Church, where spiritual matters were first dealt

⁷³ Wexionius 1646 A3v; 1657, 6-7.

⁷⁴ May/Galen (n. 52) Introduction 53-54 and text 4.1-3 (Helmreich I 195-98).

⁷⁵ Wexionius 1657, 7-8.

⁷⁶ May/Galen 4,6 (Helmreich I 200-201).

with by *praepositus territorialis (prost)*, next by Provincial Consistories, and finally, if need be, in the Royal Consistory.

At the end of the passage he returns to the comparison. When all the phases of digestion have been accomplished, healthy blood spreads throughout the body, resulting in a good constitution. Analogously in the state, due observance of correct procedure results in *commodus reip(ublicae) status*. The lesson of the comparison is clear: hierarchical but careful handling of legal and administrative matters is a precondition of a healthy state.

In most of the comparisons so far discussed Wexionius, unless he – which I do not believe – used a source which he does not mention, shows originality. Comparisons to the central colleges were possible only in Sweden. Drawing upon the internal senses was original, too. The author was on a more traditional ground in discussing the political analogies to hands, shoulders, back, and feet. John of Salisbury likened the feet to the peasants, who bear the whole bulk of the body (see p. 50).⁷⁷ Guevara gives the same explanation whereas the hands represent for him the nobility, who fight the enemy. Shoulders and the back were not mentioned by John or Guevara. Moreover, the analogical members in the body politic show a greater variety in Wexionius.⁷⁸ Thus the **hands** correspond to skilled laborers and artisans, in wartime to the cavalry- and infantrymen and the sailors. Because the **shoulders** and the **back** were suitable for bearing burdens, Wexionius parallels them to *meri subditi*, the *plebs*. He also widened the political analogies of the **feet**. Besides agriculture, they represent commerce, too.⁷⁹ The laborers and soldiers no less than farmers and merchants all constitute the common people. I will presently take up Wexionius's attitude to them.

To be as complete as possible, Wexionius includes the **procreative organs**, and in the edition of 1657, even the nails. The former, appropriately, correspond to household and marriage. The **nails**, which man uses to scratch prurient members and to remove pus, sanies and blood, are compared to barber-chirurgians and to people who execute and punish criminals and malefactors, the state's ulcers.

Although Wexionius already referred to a social order, the common people, in dealing with the political analogies to the limbs, it is only in dis-

⁷⁷ In fact, this comparison was already suggested by Dionysius of Halicarnassus, see p. 49 above.

⁷⁸ Wexionius 1646 A3v-A4r; 1657, pp. 9-10.

⁷⁹ Ibid. A4r and 1657 pp. 11-19.

cussing, in modern terminology, the connective tissues of the body, that he speaks of the whole social structure of the state. At this time, it was composed of four orders: the nobility, the clergy, the bourgeoisie, and the peasantry. Wexionius compared the **bones** to the nobility, the **cartilage**, midway between bones and flesh, to the *literati*, who in the Estates were represented by the clergy, and **flesh** to the common people, the *plebs*.⁸⁰ Only the burghers, the representatives of the towns, were missing. **Nervi** meant here sinews, not nerves proper, which were already known to Galen.⁸¹ This does not of course suggest that Wexionius would have been ignorant of the correct meaning of nerves. But because classical Latin, even a medical writer like Celsus, used *nervus* for sinews, this usage survived in post-classical Latin.⁸² In the body politic, *nervi* or sinews did not represent a social group at all. They symbolized the material and non-material factors, rewards to the good, punishments to the wicked, as well as mutual affection and trust between the high and the low, the nobility and the people, which firmly bound the members of the body politic together. For all that, because Wexionius aimed at completeness in the description of the human body, the absence of *nervi* in the established Galenic sense is somewhat unexpected.

Comparing the nobility to the bones which hold the body together was not found in John of Salisbury. In Guevara the bones represented the wise men who support the burden of the state. The comparison did not, however, originate with Wexionius. In the edition of 1657 he has a long quotation from Giovanni Botero, an Italian political philosopher, who in praising the nobility parallels them to the skeleton, upon which the whole political system rests.⁸³ The brief reference in 1646 was otherwise, too greatly expanded. He cites Swedish history to prove the importance of the nobility. Foreign rulers, Albert of Mecklenburg and Eric of Pomerania as well as Christian II surnamed Tyrant, harassed and tried to annihilate the Swedish nobility whereas the good kings and true *patres patriae* enlarged, favored and strengthened it. The heroes of the nobility had often saved the mother-

⁸⁰ Ibid. A4r and 1657, pp. 12-19.

⁸¹ May/Galen (n. 52) 61-62.

⁸² *Nervus* was in fact never used in the sense of "nerve" in Roman literature, see TLL, ad loc.

⁸³ As a rule, Wexionius drew upon the Latin translations of works originally published in a modern language. Botero's *Della ragion di stato* was first published in Venice in 1589. The quotation was taken from Lib. IV Cap. III of the Latin translation.

land from oppressive servitude. He also mentions the wise governance of the high nobility during Christina's minority.

The opposite to the nobility was the common people. In Greek as well in Roman literature, the common people, οἱ πολλοί, *multitudo*, *vulgus*, were almost as a rule considered stupid, fickle, and irresponsible.⁸⁴ The humanists from Petrarch on and later the political philosophers like Lipsius and Althusius inherited, and mainly shared, these disparaging ideas. The only noteworthy exception to this low opinion of the qualities of the people was Machiavelli. Wexionius naturally followed this common opinion. After praising the solid strength of the nobility, he remarks: *Vulgi namque ingenium, in quosvis affectus pronum esse, plus satis notum*. In Chapter 10, on *Mere Subditi*, he lists no less than 16 negative features of the *vulgus*.⁸⁵

Like flesh, the people are the most copious part of the body politic, and like it, they are soft, *ad quemvis ventum mobilior*. The people are the more useful the more readily they yield to the will of the authorities. But if they be obstinate and inflexible, like hard flesh they will be subjected to pressures, an assertion supported with the example of the Jewish people, who suffered God's punishment for their obstinacy.

Wexionius admits that he may have expatiated upon the idea of the common people more than it was his intention. But he claims that the discussion can be useful to the academic youth, even to the students of theology, that is, future clergymen. His attachment to the hierarchical view on society and his pro-nobility sentiment are here explicit. When the students enter upon their office, they should remind every one of his duties. They should not unwisely think that because the populace (*plebecula*) maintains them, they should defend and protect them and their freedom. This is mere stupidity. They do not understand what are each social order's nature and du-

⁸⁴ See my "*Vulgus instabile et imperitum*. A Study of the Survival of an Attitude", *International Journal of the Classical Tradition* (forthcoming).

⁸⁵ Wexionius 1657, 350-51: *Vulgus* is *verbis ferox, inconstans, stupidum, credulum, publica negligens privatis inhians, suspicax, invidum, leve, lucri avidum, superstitiosum, praesentia fastidians, secundis rebus insolens, ad plures inclinans, rerum novarum cupidum, sine duce nil audet, ludicris delectatur*. Although this list of reprehensible qualities clearly proceeded from Lipsius and ultimately from Roman authors like Cicero and Tacitus (see my work, n. 84), Wexionius asserts that *experientia* shows these and similar vices to be characteristic of *imperitum vulgus* and *plebecula*. The common people are not credited with a single positive feature. However, as will be shown in the main text, in the contexts in which he was not hamstrung by this classical and humanist prejudice, his idea of the people was much more favorable.

ties, thereby thrusting themselves and their audience into utter ruin and permanent servitude.⁸⁶

The hierarchical structure of society was a God-given reality, and trying to subvert or merely to weaken it unacceptable. It will be noticed that since 1646, Wexionius's pro-aristocracy stance had been strengthened, no doubt because of the fact that in 1650 he had been raised to the nobility himself. In the Session of the Estates in the same year Wexionius, originally a member of the Clergy, contrary to the position of his colleagues expressed views in favor of the nobility.⁸⁷

It is, however, erroneous to think of Wexionius as an advocate of the oppression of the people. Even as flesh makes the body more beautiful, the great number of the people gives the state beauty and power.⁸⁸ The fourth estate, peasantry, also had a right to have a say in the running of the state's affairs by participating in the Estates (see p. 67). The very idea of the body politic suggested a harmonious view of political society, in which every single part was an equally important and indispensable constituent. The bones may have held the body together, but without flesh it was shrivelled and lean.

Wexionius's attitude to the common people, who at this time mainly consisted of peasants, was indeed somewhat contradictory. Although he, like most contemporary authors, repeated the traditional depreciation of the *vulgus*, hallowed by its classical origins, in his Epitome or Brief Description of Sweden and Finland, praising the valor of the Northerners, he made no distinction between the nobles and the people.⁸⁹ More than that, in another passage he maintains that any man *ex populo et infima plebe* had a right *per virtutis viam* to rise to the pinnacles of society, to be made bishops, mayors, etc. Here he also extols the traditional freedom of the Swedish freeholder.⁹⁰

As I have already remarked (p. 58), like Althusius and Jonas Magni, Wexionius equated the "temperament" of the **four humors** to a mixed constitution. But he also related them to another system of social stratification,

⁸⁶ Wexionius 1657, 18-19.

⁸⁷ Runeby (n. 21) 397-98.

⁸⁸ Wexionius 1657, 19 *Sicuti caro corporis speciem exornat, pulchrioremque reddit... ita quoque subditorum multiplicatio, imperium pulchrum ac vegetum... efficit.*

⁸⁹ Epitome 1650, Lib. IV Cap. V.

⁹⁰ Ibid., Lib. VIII Cap. I *Rusticus enim nobis non servilem, ut alijs, notat hominem, sed... ingenuum patriotam fundum et bona in regno immobilia possidens.*

division into orders in accordance with social function, *status politicus* or *re-gementståndet*, *ecclesiasticus* or *läroståndet*, *militaris* or *wärjeståndet*, and *oeconomicus* or *näreståndet*. Except for the military order,⁹¹ these groups coincide with the Estates, only the two lowest, Bourgeoisie and Peasantry, were here united into a single one, into the order which provides for the maintainance of the whole kingdom.

The doctrine of the four humors and their proper mixture or temperament as the basis of good health constituted a basic principle in Galenic medicine, and indeed survived until the birth of modern medicine.⁹² Besides physical, the humors had psychic effects as well, each humor being made responsible for a trait or type of character. Aristotle's discussion of melancholic people, who are outstanding in philosophy, statemanship, poetry, and the arts, is well-known.⁹³ Wexionius drew upon these psychic effects to characterize the salient features of the above-mentioned orders. The only exception is blood. Thus, *flava bilis*, which generates anger and makes people courageous and sleepless, befits the ruler, who must be possessed of *magnitudo animi* and anger to punish wrongdoers and who passes sleepless nights in looking after the security of his subjects. Black bile or *melancholia* produces thoughtful, intelligent, and earnest people, such as the clerical order, who must be distinguished by good intellect and a good behaviour. Phlegm or *pituita* produces slow and dull people. Wexionius argues, apologetically, that the majority of the common soldiers are like that. Blood was the most copious of the humors. Wexionius had obvious difficulties in finding a suitable equivalent to it in the body politic. He writes that because in

⁹¹ Wexionius 1646, A4v; 1657, pp. 20-23. He excuses the inclusion of the military order by its importance in the Swedish state.

⁹² Hippocrates, *The Nature of Man* 4, already gave the basic principles of the physical doctrine of the four humors. That the theory constituted the central element of Galenic physiology is well-known, see May/Galen (n. 52) 44-45; Harvey (n. 54) 4.

⁹³ Aristotle, *Problems* 30,1; cf. H. Flashar, ed. *Aristoteles, Problemata physica*, 1962, 711ff. for interpretation. Cicero, *Tusc.* 1,80 repeats the argument: *Aristoteles quidem ait omnis ingeniosos melancholicos esse*. In the Renaissance, especially because of its association with astrology, the four-humor doctrine came to exert enormous influence in arts and sciences. Melanchthon (n. 55) 79-87 gives a lucid overview of the prevalent ideas of the humors. They sprang from the four basic substances, fire, earth, water, and air, contained in the blood generated in the liver. Melanchthon surveys the physiological properties of the different humors as well as their psychological effects. The excess of any humor in the *crasis* or *temperamentum* produces the types of character known as choleric, melancholic, and phlegmatic, though he did not use these terms here.

this passage something should correspond to each humor, we may compare blood to the *plebs*, which excels by its quantity. He was indeed aware of the fact that some of his comparisons were rather forced.⁹⁴

Finally, Wexionius comes to the constituent which makes the body a living organism, *vitalis spiritus*, and to the immaterial soul, *anima*, which distinguishes man from animals.⁹⁵ He had, however, already dealt with vital spirit which, originating in the heart, symbolized the administration of justice (see p. 68). The fact that he once again, and now from a different angle, utilizes vital spirit for a comparison, suggests that he had given insufficient care to the composition of the Introduction. But there is another possibility. It may be that what he in this passage really means was not vital but animal spirit (see p. 68). The interpretation which he gives to spirit in this passage suggests this alternative.

In both the 1646 and 1657 editions, *spiritus vitalis* is equated with *literae*, literary culture or learning. Stressing the pivotal significance of learning as a vital principle of society was an arch-humanist idea. In 1646, Wexionius did not pursue the idea further, but in 1657 he expanded it by a quotation from Seneca, which, though, instead of clarifying only obscures the meaning. In de clem. 1,4,1 Seneca, quoting the already familiar image of the body politic, compares the ruler to the mind, *animus*, and also to *spiritus vitalis*, thus: *Ille* (scil., the ruler) *est enim vinculum, per quod res publica cohaeret, ille spiritus vitalis, quem haec tot milia trahunt, nihil ipsa per se futura nisi onus et praeda, si mens ille imperii* (scil., the ruler) *subtrahatur*. With one minor difference, Wexionius's quotation is correct. By including the word *politia*, in brackets, after *ipsa per se* he intimates that it is the state which will suffer if *mens imperii* is withdrawn, but in his presentation *mens imperii*, the same as *spiritus vitalis*, instead of to the ruler, now refers to learning. The original meaning in Seneca was thus totally altered. It may be that Wexionius had taken the quotation second-hand, otherwise it is difficult to understand how he could thus ignore the real significance of Seneca's comparison.

⁹⁴ Wexionius 1657, 23 *Similitudo enim ultra comparationis tertium non extendenda, cum omnis similitudo claudicet. Adeoque quodvis simile, etiam sit dissimile.*

⁹⁵ Wexionius 1646 A4r-A5r; 1657 pp. 23-24. The doctrine of *anima* was equally traditional as that of vital spirit, originating from Platonic and Aristotelian philosophy, see May/Galen (n. 52) 45. Melanchthon (n. 55) 139 argues that man has immaterial *anima*, which the beasts do not have. It possesses two faculties, *intellectus* and *voluntas*.

Wexionius explains *anima* to stand for *leges et jura*, lawful order. In the edition of 1646, this is clarified by stating that it means the just and equitable interchange of command and obedience, which of course alludes to social hierarchy. In both editions, by drawing upon the traditional concept of the mind, he parallels reason (*intellectus*) to royal power, which rules according to the laws; will (*voluntas*) to mixed subjects, who obey the right reason or the king; sensual appetite (*sensitivus appetitus*) to *mere subditi*, who are content with obeying the royal decrees passed on to them through the mixed subjects. This comparison is very likely attributable to Wexionius, for the division of political community into *subditi mixti* and *mere subditi* was peculiar to his political thought (see p. 59).

The most infelicitous of Wexionius's comparisons was that between the staffs, which a man needs to walk steadily and to avoid stumbling, and religion and justice, which make the state firm and stable. In Christian times, religion and justice were indeed the two essential virtues which a healthy state requires.⁹⁶ But the image of a staff inevitably suggested the idea of an old and decrepit state. In the edition of 1646, he did not refer to this, but in the new edition he, apologetically, remarks that "our great and very old body of the empire" is on both sides supported by *religio* and *justitia*. But he still avoided any suggestion of decrepitude. Probably because the Introduction was meant to serve as a kind of summary of the contents of *Politica*, Wexionius uses still one more comparison which goes beyond the human body proper: Even as a man needs friends and interpreters, the state needs allies and envoys, discussed in Chapters 15-16.

Most of the comparisons so far dealt with were unknown in classical literature, in which usually only the head and the body were referred to, as well as in John of Salisbury and Guevara. But comparing the various disorders and afflictions which can befall a state to **illnesses** in the human body was a classical topos.⁹⁷ Cicero stigmatized Catilina's intrigues as a *morbis* hidden in the veins and intestines of Rome.⁹⁸ Pliny the Younger argued that an illness in the head of the body as well as of a state was the most serious

⁹⁶ *Iustitia*, however, is here a wide concept, universal justice, the necessary prerequisite of civil society. Cf. Melancthon, *Philosophiae moralis epitome*, in: *Werke* 3, 1961, 200 *haec* (scil., justice) *gubernat ceteras virtutes et praecipuum vinculum est societatis civilis*.

⁹⁷ For passages in Greek literature, see Momigliano (n. 1).

⁹⁸ In *Catilinam* 1,31.

of all.⁹⁹ In later times, especially in political writings in the sixteenth-seventeenth centuries, the metaphor was common: "The state, or 'body politic' is described as being subject to 'illness', so that the ruler or minister has to be able to interpret pathological symptoms".¹⁰⁰ Many of the writers of the tracts or treatises in which the simile occurred were themselves physicians.

In the Introduction, Wexionius deals with the *morbi* of *Imperij corpus*, asserting that although afflictions in any member may be destabilizing, those in the head are especially dangerous (cf. Pliny above).¹⁰¹ But the most serious affliction ensued if the nerves which join the head to the lower members and the latter to each other were weakened, injured or broken, or if either or both of the pillars which support the bulk of the body were shaken or overturned. The moral of the comparison is clear: *nervi* symbolized the mutual trust and affection between the ruler and the ruled as well as between the high and low orders, while the pillars or staffs represented religion and justice. Thus, these immaterial factors or virtues, in the last resort, held a state together.

* * *

In the last chapter of *Politica*, Wexionius applied to Sweden both the ancient idea of the history of a state as the biological process of growth and decay, and that of political troubles as an illness cured by a good physician or statesman.

The Swedish state had experienced six ages: *infantia*, 300 years, from Magog to the Judges;¹⁰² *pueritia*, 410 years, when wickedness and ignorance were growing and idolatry replaced true religion; *adolescencia*, 330 years, the age of the first Gothic exploits; *iuvenile robur*, 1098 years, to the birth of Christ, the age of the wars against the Danes, Russians, Estonians, etc.; *virilis aetas*, to A.D. 980, when the royal abode was established at Uppsala and the kingdom strengthened and enlarged; *senescens aetas*, which

⁹⁹ Epist. 4,22,7; cf. p. 50 above.

¹⁰⁰ Peter Burke, in: Burns (n. 15) 482.

¹⁰¹ Wexionius 1646, A5r-v; 1657, pp. 25-26: almost identical.

¹⁰² Wexionius naturally followed the common idea of the Biblical origin and prehistory of the Swedish people, which Johannes Magnus had canonized in his *Gothorum Sveonumque historia*, Basiliae 1583. Magog, the son of Japheth and grandson of Noah, was the ancestor and first king of the Swedes.

usually makes people wiser, in Sweden meant the acceptance of the venerable wisdom of Christian religion.

It should be noted that Wexionius did not follow the cyclic view of classical philosophy towards history, according to which old age was attended by decay and followed by death, after which a rebirth and a new cycle took place.¹⁰³ In Christian thought, the course of history was not cyclic but linear, striving towards the Second Coming of Christ and the end of secular history. The best-known and most eloquent exponent of this philosophy was St. Augustine.¹⁰⁴ He divided human history into six periods in analogy to the six days of Creation.¹⁰⁵ The sixth period, which began with Christ's work of Redemption, inaugurated *senectus*, but that meant *senectus veteris hominis* and the birth of *homo novus*. History ended on the seventh day, the day of rest. Wexionius's periodization observes this traditional schema of world history. For him, *senectus* represented the age when true religion finally triumphed. But until victory was secured, the state had to undergo perilous times, which he compares to illnesses. By them he means the troubles at the end of the Middle Ages and the period of Danish rule. Finally, when the state seemed to be in the throes of death, a true doctor appeared, Gustavus Wasa, who revived the state *praesentissima exhibens pharmaca, optimisque vulnera emplastris religens*, that is, hereditary monarchy and the Reformation.¹⁰⁶

The end of the chapter blends classical and Christian ideas and symbols:

Sic namque, deposita quasi senectute, ad instar aquilae rejuvenescit, accrescit. Tu o Deus omnipotens in ultima hac aetate, quae et mundi postrema, gressus ac brachia sublevare ne desistas!

Putting away old age and being reborn like a phoenix¹⁰⁷ suggests the cyclic

¹⁰³ Posterity learnt these ideas especially from Polybius's sixth book, see p. 50 above.

¹⁰⁴ Theodor E. Mommsen, "St Augustine and the Christian Idea of Progress". *Journal of the History of Ideas* 1951, 346-74.

¹⁰⁵ Augustinus, *De genesi contra Manichaeos*. *Patrologia Latina* 34, 190-93. For other passages, see R.A. Markus in A.H. Armstrong, ed. *The Cambridge History of Later Greek and Early Medieval Philosophy*, 1967 (1970) 406-407.

¹⁰⁶ Wexionius 1646, B2r-B3v; 1657, pp. 545-49: practically identical.

¹⁰⁷ *Aquila* must here mean the fabulous bird phoenix, for which and the legends connected with it, see my *Christina heroina*, 1993, 52-53.

view of the ancient philosophy while the last sentence, describing the present age as the world's last, was truly Christian.

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