

Anarchic Blood in US v. Wong Kim Ark (1898)
A Political Theological Sketch
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What is “political theology”?

Politikos (political): of citizens, pertaining to the state and its administration; that which pertains to public life.

Theologia (theology): an account of the gods; lit.: “god-words”

Schmitt:

Cavanaugh:

O’Donovan:

Who was Wong Kim Ark?

b. 1873

Chinese American

San Francisco, California

Labor

Home-Away-Home

How ought the “other Other” belong in the United States?

Jus soli (law of land)

Jus sanguinis (law of blood)

Reading *US v. Wong Kim Ark (1898)* as “theo-logic”

Theo-logic: talk about God as “a situated and collaboratively accomplished, lived-in detail of self-regulating communicative processes, [which is] not an individual state of mind, a belief, or a metaphysical education, but rather a property of certain social communicative processes” (Schweizer-Bjelic and Bjelic, “God-Talk,” pp. 342-43).

Kinds and sense of blood

Racialized and ethnic blood (liberal affairs)

Ancestry

Ethnicity

Race

Hybrid bloods

Phenotype

Nation-state affiliation

Anarchic blood

Ethnicity and narrative

The Blood of Christ

Blood and theological narrative

Summary

Blood [and esp. the blood of Christ] violates national and racial boundaries by virtue of its fluidity – as it (freely) flows between bodies and places to generate new forms of life that confound liberal notions of order and categorization. Blood is anarchic because, as the above theological reflections suggest, its center is theorized as somewhere beyond the institutions, bureaucracies, and legal proceedings that seek to contain it. Ethnic and theological narrative, religious ritual and rite, may well be one of the only ways to bring coherence to “anarchic blood.”