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PHANTOM BODIES OF KINGS. THE PRESEN- CE OF THE ABSENT

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INTRODUCTION

Setting the direction of dissertation topic was the Matejko's iconic representation of 44 monochromatic figures of Polish monarchs and princes. His work was part of a long tradition of postcards, dating back to the Renaissance. King's posts, significant in the European tradition gained importance in the 19th century with the development of historical sciences. Particularly under the Partitions, Matejko's posts were a reminder of Poland's past monarchical history. Matejko, combining historical painting with national identity, influenced the historical memory and national identity of Poland. The Polish Kings and Princes Post by Jan Matejko, begun in February 1890, commissioned by Maurice Perles and in collaboration with historian and Jagiellonian University prof. Stanisław Smolka, became a national icon. His work continued the tradition of earlier posts, including those by Miechowita, Treter, Lesser and Bacciarelli^[1]. In the 21st century, Waldemar Świeży created a new post of Polish Kings, based on contemporary, updated historical research, emphasizing attention to the authenticity of figures depicted. The drawing of the *Polish Kings and Princes Post* by Jan Matejko from the '90s of the 19th century, as well as a contemporary, colorful interpretation of all 49 consecutive rulers of Poland painted by Prof. Waldemar Świeży^[2]. While studying the artistic craftsmanship of both eminent artists – although extremely diverse in terms of both their depiction of figures and interpretation of monarchical personalities – I was accompanied by the need to divest myself of the historically accumulated iconographic arsenal of rulers' representations. Abandoning the iconographic traditions and criteria of this genre of art allows to drop the framework of convention and idealization of the message of Polish history. Making an attempt to transcend the established sphere could, in the audience's imagination, shake the foundations of the images of royal figures created so far. Stripping away the muzzle of interpretations of the figure of Polish rulers, formulated and perpetuated mainly on the basis of the Matejko post, allows to look at history and, above all, the figure of the king himself from an external perspective. Such a perspective devoid of the pressure of historical identity is an important feature of this perception of the magnates in this case. Leaving subjectivity and focusing on personality is a certain breakout related to the definition of monarchical portraiture. *Phantom body of the king* is an excellent expression illustrating how a change of perspective can effectively make a transformation within the discourse. It was Jan Sowa's book^[3] that provided the impetus in developing the concept for this dissertation. By paving a change of optics, revealing areas hitherto almost untouched,

[1] *Paths of History: Polish Kings*, Internet: https://www.historiaposzukaj.pl/sciezki_historii_12.poczty.html, dated December 15, 2023.

[2] *New Polish Kings online*, Internet: <https://label-magazine.com/lifestyle/artykuly/nowy-poczecz-wladcow-polski-online>, dated December 15, 2023.

[3] J. Sowa, *Phantom Body of the King. Peripheral struggles with modern form*, TAIWPN Universitas, Cracow 2011.

it somehow forces a reinterpretation of the royal images, from the perspective of new currents in contemporary humanities. It will allow to consider historical complexities through the image, as a kind of interpretation of the representation of soul of the portrayed person.

The immortal communal body, despite its supreme status vis-à-vis the temporal body, remained invisible. This provokes my attempt – albeit in a different context – to depict the king's communal body with his physical body, i.e. the image being a carrier of what is immortal and beyond time, in such a way that it could exist in a mortal, human body. Commemoration of the presence of absent: *What is absent from the very beginning is precisely the subject*^[4] – Lacan claimed. Can the portrait, as a form that directly expresses the subject's presence, fully correspond with the doctrine of the king's two bodies? Building images of rulers based on the foundations of physiognomy, as a tool in an attempt to capture the duality of the human person, not only to keep the portrayed person alive, but to capture in the form of an image the relationship between soul and body. Based on the legal and mystical theory of English jurists^[5], an attempt is made to change the medium and mode of communication by transferring the unobservable layers of personality, disposition, temperament or mental state to the visual arts. To create a spiritual image of monarchs. It seems legitimate at this point to pose a question: how we perceive the person of the ruler through the prism of his position?

In order to discover the inner man and reach through the mechanisms of power directly to the king's figure, it is necessary to carry out a broader analysis of the political context, the cultural behavior of society and the symbols associated with the monarch's power. In this process, I would like to expand the subject of historical analysis to include the subject (the figure of the ruler). The presence of the absent takes on a special expression, and in the encounter with him the distance of history, if not eliminated, seems to be at least muted^[6]. This raises a question: how can we attempt to reinterpret the past? The demythologization of the royal portraits will allow a direct encounter, the establishment of a dialogue and even finding some kind of convergent relationship occurring between past and present, existence and memory or the analogy of our archetypal emotions. Therefore, we face the story that the portrait reveals and conveys to us.

[4] J. Lacan, *La logique du fantasme*, quoted in J. Sowa, *Phantom Body of the King. Peripheral struggles with modern form*, TAI-WPN Universitas, Cracow 2011, p. 351.

[5] The mystical-legal theory, otherwise known as the theory of the King's Two Bodies, was discovered by Maitland in the Reports of Edmund Plowden from the reign of Elizabeth I Tudor on the throne of England and Ireland. It describes a metaphorical distinction between the monarch's natural body and political body. Plowden, a lawyer from Middle Temple, one of the four major London law schools (alongside Inner Temple, Gray's Inn, and Lincoln's Inn), in his works refers to judicial decisions, explaining that the king has two bodies (a political body and a natural body). This concept was utilized in English royal law to justify that the monarch's actions cannot be rejected due to his personal limitations, such as minority, as was the case with Edward VI. Middle Temple, where Plowden studied, was part of the Inns of Court, an important institution in the English legal system, where lawyers were also judges in royal courts.

[6] R. Solik, *Presence, memory, face – the dilemma of representation* [in:] *Faces, portraits, masks*, ed. A. Kowalczyk-Klus, R. Solik, Artystyczna Oficyna Drukarska, Cieszyn 2010, p. 12.

NO.1 PARADIGM OF
THE KING'S TWO
BODIES

› NO.^{1.1}

ERNST KANTOROWICZ – GERMAN MEDIEVALIST
AND THE PHENOMENON OF ROYAL POWER

› NO.^{1.2}

INTERPRETATION OF THE CONCEPT OF
THE RULER'S DUAL ESSENCE

Le roi est mort, vive le roi! – The King is dead, long live the King! The symbolism of the King living despite the death of the king is combined with the most symptomatic example of royal duality in modern times – the rite of prayer initiated in France for the deceased king along with the simultaneous proclamation of the successor to the throne. The apparent antinomy of the impersonal proclamation was an unmistakable gesture of reassurance to the public about the continuity of the royal throne. The lapidary proclamation expressed the complex legal and theological doctrine of Tudor-era jurists formed in 16th-century England, namely the doctrine of the King's Two Bodies. The mystical-legal construction, which Ernst Kantorowicz thoroughly analyzes in his reflections, has an important legal basis also in other countries of medieval Europe^[7].

Kantorowicz's classic work for 20th-century medieval studies is being published in Poland half a century after its first edition in 1957. The person whose first edition under the original title *The King's Two Bodies* is published by Princeton University Press is a German-American medieval historian of Jewish origin, born and educated in Poznań. The figure of the 20th-century prominent historian and intellectual has been introduced with precision by Robert E. Lerner^[8]. The biography's author approaches the figure of the medievalist with historical objectivity, not evading detailed analysis of even some questionable pages of history in Kantorowicz's biography. The result of a multifaceted exploration of an extensive range of historical and biographical material, Lerner's work is the first full-scale biography of Kantorowicz that separates the authenticity of events from fiction. Undoubtedly, the most important distinguishing point of the German emigrant's biographical work is the embedding of the medievalist's multilayered personality in the context of historical background of the time, which is the basis for this substantial archival materials, including statements of co-workers or close people from Kantorowicz's entourage, as well as private correspondence of the biography's protagonist. The whole work, worthy of a documentalist, makes up a realistic picture of the turbulent life of a rebellious historian of the past century, whose works are a significant deposit brought to the area of modern humanities and will currently stand as an interpretation of world medieval studies^[9].

The fascinating figure of Ernst Hartwig Kantorowicz is a mixture of unconventional character of a humanist and a tangle of historical events, not

[7] E.H. Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies. A study in medieval political theology*, transl. M. Michalski and A. Krawiec, Warsaw 2007.

[8] R. E. Lerner, *Ernst Kantorowicz – A Life*, Princeton University Press, Princeton 2018.

[9] J. Heilbrunn, *The Kantorowicz Conundrum*, "The National Interest," April 16, 2020.

without influence on the shape of the content of his publications. However, leaving the figure of an eminent historian aside, in order to give the opportunity to delve into a threadbare reading of Lerner's biography, and direct attention to the genesis of the subject under consideration and analyze indisputably one of the two most famous works of the German medievalist. *The King's Two Bodies. A Study in Medieval Political Theology* – is a classic study devoted to the mystique of medieval power. Kantorowicz's *magnum opus* is an interdisciplinary work that goes well beyond the fields of history, theology or medieval studies. The book subtitled *A Study in Medieval Political Theology* is an in-depth analysis of the phenomenon of royal power supported in the armature of issues in canon law, Roman law, English common law, philosophy, as well as art history, partaking also of fiction and rich sources of iconographic artifacts. Therefore, the author has at his disposal incredible source material, supplementing the text's factual value with several thousand footnotes for the indefatigable purists of medieval theology. Thus, Kantorowicz, with his innovative methodology for the study of the historical process, has put himself at one with the founders of the Annales^[10] school headed by M. Bloch, remaining one of the most influential historians and humanists of the 20th century^[11].

[10] The Annales school is a historiographical trend that originated in France in the 1920s. The name "Annales" comes from the journal *Annales d'histoire économique et sociale*. The Annales School was founded in 1929 by Marc Bloch and Lucien Febvre, introducing interdisciplinarity, long-term analysis and social science methods to historiography. It focused on long-term processes, rejecting the traditional approach to one-time events. It had a key influence on the development of historiography, also known as "long duration history." Prominent representatives include Bloch, Febvre, Duby, Le Goff.

[11] K. Wroblewska, *Human by nature, divine by grace. About the King's Two Bodies by Ernst H. Kantorowicz*, "Monthly Sign," No. 644 1/2019.

NO.^{1,2} / INTERPRETATION OF THE CONCEPT OF THE RULER'S DUAL ESSENCE

Kantorowicz's classic study of medieval politics builds a genealogy of sorts for the formation of the medieval legal fiction of the King's Two Bodies based on 16th-century Elizabethan legislation with its translation also into the European legal order of the political doctrines of dual majesty of the sovereign. Kantorowicz's study begins with the case of British monarch Charles I Stuart, dethroned and later beheaded during the Puritan Revolution. Citing events from the first half of the 17th century, the author points out the act of direct influence of this complex legal construct on the real entity of the governor. Here arises a certain doubt that appeared in the medieval cult of the ruler about his divinity, and at the same time the status of God's anointed in the person of the royal governor. The legal and theological construct submitted and fully formulated by English jurists of the Tudor era precedes and formalizes in the form of doctrine, what manifests under various mystical-political structures – although without literal transfer – in the late Middle Ages in European monarchs^[12].

The basis and interpretation of the concept on the dual nature of the ruler is articulated in the so-called *Edmund Plowden Reports*. The lawyer of Elizabethan times, wrote: *The king has two Bodies within himself, namely the Natural Body (body natural) and the Political Body (body politic). The Natural Body (when considered by itself) is a mortal body, subject to all the impotences that belong to it by nature or by chance (...). But its Communal Body is a Body that cannot be seen or touched, consisting of politics and government and destined to lead the people and manage the public good, and this Body is completely devoid of infancy, old age and other natural blemishes and immaturities to which the natural body is subject (...). This Body*

[12] E.H. Kantorowicz, op. cit., pp. 18.

is not subject like others to passions or death, because in this Body the King does not die, and his natural death is not defined in our law as the death of the King, but as the transfer of the of the King's Crown. The term transfer (demise) does not mean that the King's Community Body died, but that there was a separation of two bodies, and that the Community Body was transferred and passed over the dead natural body, stripped of its royal dignity, to another natural body. So this means the transfer of the Community Body of the King of this Kingdom from one natural body to another. (...) And the King is the name of continuity, which always survives as the head and ruler of the people, as the Law presupposes (...), and in this way the King never dies^[13]. The legal-institutional doctrine of the King's two bodies resolves one of fundamental problems raised by the coupling of the monarch's transience as a mortal man with the timeless permanence of the state. Legislative solutions allowed to create the idea of an immortal communal body, ruled by a perpetual head. The head is a fundamental component of the Crown (state) as a corporate body. Therefore, the king should be regarded as a concentration of the „natural body” mortal in its human physicality with the „political body” understood as the organic form of the state. Political corporeality (*body politic*) is an immortal idea otherwise known as royal dignity. This means that the King simultaneously possesses two identities^[14]. The duality of the King's identity (dignity and body) forms part of the core of a concept that has its solid basis in the medieval sacralization of reality – according to Kantorowicz – referred to by the term political theology. This duality grew out of the divine and human nature of Christ^[15]. The resemblance of reigning monarch to Christ, and the related theory of the sacralization of royal power can be found in the so-called Anonymus of Normandy as early as ca. 1100. The early medieval clericalization of the royal office underwent significant transformations over the following centuries. Kantorowicz points out how Anonymus' presented image of the ruler differs from that defined by Tudor-era jurists. The return to the tradition of Roman law deepened the pauperization of the Christological aspect of monarchical power. The duality of monarch's person would henceforth be valued in the context of secular legal jurisdictions, but not canon law^[16].

The English doctrine of the King's Two Bodies in its precisely defined legalese may appear complex and incomprehensible. Nevertheless, the legal construction of the immortal, doubled body of the king is a kind of prototype for the modern definition of a legal person. The jurists of the Tudor era defined it as a figure of a one-man corporation, in other words, a king in a political body. Therefore, there is the persona of the King possessing his own natural body and soul, and the figure of the King, which is formulated by a special category of legal person, otherwise understood as a political body encompassing the entire organic state^[17]. Kantorowicz cites the proclamations of Pope Innocent IV, which unequivocally defined the supra-individual nature of „persona ficta.” The pope demonstrated that the nature of collective „persons” – *universitas* – is an intellectual entity. These are persons deprived of a body and thus of a soul, so as such they cannot be condemned, while the lack of a body prevents the execution of an immaterial entity. The figure of fictional person as *persona representata* imagined the personification of *universitas*. The pejorative overtones of this fictionality, according to Kantorowicz, should be definitely distanced. The term *persona ficta* separated the concept of the private person from the natural person made up of body and soul. Thus solidifying the collective person (a multiplicity of entities concentrated in one body) as a fictional person, and as an in-

[13] E. Plowden, *Commentaries or Reports*, London 1816, pp. 177, 212a, 233a, quoted in E.H. Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies. A study in medieval political theology*, transl. M. Michalski and A. Krawiec, Warsaw 2007, pp. 5-6, 10, 322.

[14] E.H. Kantorowicz, op. cit., pp. 304-355.

[15] K. Wroblewska, op. cit.

[16] B. Markowska, *Dignitas non moritur. About the King's Two Bodies by Ernst H. Kantorowicz*, *Civitas. Studies in the Philosophy of Politics*, 12, pp. 307-308.

[17] J. Sowa, op. cit., pp. 233-234.

dependent subject without losing its value. In support of his thesis, he invokes Thomas Aquinas' „fiction" in its positive overtones defined as *figura veritatis*, defined as a form of truth^[18].

Kantorowicz, in the continuation of his considerations in the area of corporation body, raises in addition to the issue of the *plurality of persons gathered in one body*^[19] also the key aspect of the agency of Time. In doing so, citing the claims of Thomas Aquinas, he points out that recognizing the corporate *universitas* as a common entity existing „now" (together in the same Time) would stand in opposition to the complete idea of a true *corpus mysticum*. Succession in Time along with continuity was the fundamental condition making *universitas* an immortal entity. The institution of *corpus mysticum* concentrated the head as well as the members – including in their succession – in parallel while maintaining its immutability, the effect being that it was immortal in the majesty of law. The individual mortal units that made up the corporate multitude lost their significance in the face of the eternal community body. This body built on individual components could last despite the annihilation of physical individuals. *Universitas* and the individual, transient members of the corporate body built an immortal figure. The communal plurality of members (built through succession) based on a new construction considered exclusively in relation to Time constituted the concept of corporate person. Therefore, the term of one-man corporate body (fictitious person) was created, expressed through a complete array of representatives constituting the lineage of all past and future successors along with all members living simultaneously. This formed corporate body brought the „plurality of persons" to a single mystical body existing as a result of perpetual succession, the mortal representative of which lost its meaning in relation to an immortal corporate body represented by its own person^[20]. The corporation as an ordered multiplicity of entities is concentrated in a single, political body of the king. This order is explained by legal historian Maitland – based on Plowden's reports – indicating in his study that: *The King has a dual capacity in that he has two bodies: a natural body and a political body. The members of the latter are his subjects, and he and his subjects form corporations. (...) He is incorporated with them and they with him; he is the head and they are the members, and he is their sole government*^[21].

The notion of a one-man corporation has eliminated the complex problem of the perpetuity of the „head." Admittedly, a doubt remains as to what to do with the „head" of the community body, being an exemplary, mortal human being. The perpetuity of the royal „head," or in fact its absence, could have caused a precedent in which the corporate body becomes an incomplete entity. In order to prevent the disintegration of corporate body represented by the head and members, another fiction of a perpetual Crown was created. Citing Baldus' consideration of the dual face of the crown, Kantorowicz points to the existence of a visible, physical crown in the form of a ring or diadem serving as one of the insignia during the coronation ceremony. There is also an invisible and immaterial Crown that is the carrier of royal power and the legitimacy to wield the entire communal body. Kantorowicz further being in polemic with Baldus tries to resolve the legal-administrative fiction of the perpetuity of invisible Crown by reaching back to the regulation of the law of succession treating the „unity" of father and son. If the borrowed letter of the law states that father and son are one, then the new legal fiction created on its basis assumes that the heir to the throne and the predecessor constituted their identity given the

[18] E.H. Kantorowicz, op. cit., pp. 244-246.

[19] Ibid, p. 248.

[20] Ibid, pp. 248-250.

[21] F. Maitland, *The Crown as Corporation*, Law Quarterly Review, 17 (1901), quoted in J. Sowa, *The Phantom Body of the King. Peripheral struggles with modern form*, TAIWPN Universitas, Cracow 2011, pp. 234-235.

office they held. The possibility of personification of inheritance well known to medieval jurists allowed by similar legal means to personify the immaterial and invisible Crown, which was linked to the uninterrupted continuity of the dynastic monarchy. The Crown as a metaphysical political body was the sphere of action of both the king and the community body as a whole. Holding the value of inalienable perpetuity, the Crown was an autonomous entity superior to the mortal entity of the king and the territorial kingdom, constituting an equal body in relation to the imperishability of political body and the continuity of dynasty.^[22]

The crystallization of the legal fiction of a perpetual Crown also determined the changes taking place in the secular coronation ceremony. The new oath formula obliged the King, together with his officials, to protect the non-personal Crown, whose representative was a personal king. The monarch, together with his subjects, could not act contrary to the interests of the Crown. The influence of canon law on the original construction of secular concept of „Crown” is undeniable. This fact is confirmed by the demonstration of the separateness between the personal king and the non-personal institution of the Crown. The hermeticity of the Crown was protected even from the personal king, as the king could harm the Crown. The Crown and the King were not parallel entities. The status of the Crown although separate from that of the king, the impersonal institution could not exist in isolation from the community body and its ever-changing members. The complexity of features attributed to the Crown clearly revealed its corporate nature. Here we find a fundamental analogy between the perpetual community body and the Crown. Both legal fictions did not form isolated entities, existing separately from their components^[23]. The incompleteness of legal corporations would render them incapable, as a certain thesis by Judge Fineux emphasizes: *corporation is a combination of head and body: neither head in itself nor body in itself*^[24]. The Crown as a complete idea could only function with the full corporate body of the Crown, formed by the King as head, and the members.

The concept of the Crown clearly articulates a separation from the personal king. However, it would be almost impossible to separate it from the King as King. The immanence of two fictions did not result in full identity between them. An element of possible convergence was the fact that the personified Crown represented a largely corporate community body. This resulted in a clear formulation of the status of personal King as the King in relation to the immaterial Crown. The perpetuity of the Crown was determined on the basis of the law of inheritance, i.e., it passed into the hands of the new King at the death of the predecessor. Nevertheless, the Crown encompassing all members was a public inheritance. The notion of a personal king as the head of the communal body coincided with the institution of the Crown precisely in a dynastic context. The Crown, by virtue of its perpetuity, never died, and neither did the King, who was merely the guardian of the Crown. The impersonal Crown was not represented solely by an individual king, but within this composite entity were included individuals holding the responsibility of establishing and defending the Crown's inalienable rights concerning the kingdom and all subjects. It was a composite communal body forming an indivisible collective of head and members as guardians of the *status coronae*. Nevertheless, the Crown as the disposer of all sovereign rights of the complete political body – despite its lack of separateness – stood above all its individual personal members. The sovereignty of

[22] E.H. Kantorowicz, op. cit., s. 268-272.

[23] Ibid, pp. 282-289.

[24] Maitland, *Sel. Ess.*, p. 79, quoted in E.H. Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies. A study in medieval political theology*, transl. M. Michalski and A. Krawiec, Warsaw 2007, p. 289.

collective body of the kingdom was encompassed in the concept of the Crown, and therefore the maintenance of the one, intact whole of the Crown was a matter of concern to each member^[25].

Dignitas non moritur – Dignity does not die. To analyze the doctrine of the King's Two Bodies without the idea of Dignity will undoubtedly involve an incomplete understanding of the essence of medieval concept. Dignitas, as opposed to the Crown – understood as a sovereign corporate body – concerns the royal office. Dignitas rests directly in the person of the king. Although the holder of fiction erected by the royal subjects is the monarch himself, Dignitas at its base has both a private and public character manifested in respectability in the name of the entire kingdom. *The office is not Dignity, but it involves Dignity*, – pointed out Bartolus, a prominent medieval jurist^[26]. Immortal Royal Dignity was one of the elements to achieve the full complementarity of the eternal communal body. The fulfillment of legal fiction of „the king who never dies” was possible through the continuing interdependence of this immortal Dignity of the royal office, with the unbroken continuity of royal dynasty, along with the permanence of the corporate body headed by the eternal head and its members^[27]. The perpetuity of the dynasty – one of three constructs of the community's legal corporateness – put an end to a kind of danger related to the period of interregnum. It was directly related to the rejection of the hitherto mystical-religious act of entrusting the kingdom to Christ as *interrex*, which provided security for the continuity of royal authority. In practice, the kingdom was under the leadership of the son of God until a new successor to the throne was established. Continuity of dynastic succession guaranteed that upon the death of the monarch, the reign of his successor would begin. The perpetuity of the communal body's corporation depended on the continuity of its head, and this gave expression sequentially in individual persons. The collection of all predecessors and future holders of royal power, who in their unity formed a fictitious person incorporated into the currently reigning ruler. The legal fiction of corporatization by succession is visually reflected in one of the scenes of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. That's when the legislative solution appears as a procession of kings – Macbeth's predecessors, with the last of the royal eight holding a list of the names of his successors^[28].

Medieval rapporteurs developing the aspect of corporatism by succession came across the unusual metaphor of mythical bird illustrating the duality of royal nature. The phoenix – a self-renewing bird – as a singular entity must perform an act of self-immolation in order to be born again later. The duality of the bird reborn from its ashes is a remarkable testimony, where the individual is at the same time the entire species, centered in itself. The Phoenix as a species was an immortal entity, but as an individual it was mortal. Following Baldus: *The phoenix is a unique and most extraordinary bird, where the entire genus is concentrated in the individual*^[29]. The bird being the heir to its own body was the prototype of dynastic succession, in which the day of the Phoenix's death is simultaneously the day of its birth. The symptomatic example of the Phoenix reflects the dual nature of the king as captured in the concept of *Dignitas*, where the individual and the species are naturally united in the person of royal governor. The death of the king is merely a transfer, and the immortal Royal Dignity is reborn in the heir to the throne^[30].

It will be reasonable to summarize the issue of the King „who never dies.” In the study under review, Kantorowicz outlines the process of redefining the

[25] E.H. Kantorowicz, op. cit., p. 295-304.

[26] Bartolus, to c. 12, l, rubr., n. 44, quoted in E.H. Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies. A study in medieval political theology*, transl. M. Michalski and A. Krawiec, Warsaw 2007, p. 305.

[27] E.H. Kantorowicz, op. cit., p. 253, 304.

[28] Ibid, pp. 266-268, 307.

[29] Bartolus, to c. 14 X 1, 29, n. 3, *In Decretales*, f. 107, quoted in E.H. Kantorowicz, *The King's Two Bodies. A study in medieval political theology*, transl. M. Michalski and A. Krawiec, Warsaw 2007, pp. 308-309.

[30] E. H. Kantorowicz, op. cit. pp. 305-313.

dignity of the king, a reflection of the systematic secularization of the monarch's person. Nevertheless, the doctrine of the king's two bodies, which grew and matured on theological grounds, will continue to be considered as a mystical-legal construct. The gradual secularization of royal power did not deprive the attribute of the mystical aura of the king's figure. The doctrine of the king's two bodies in Kantorowicz's interpretation constituted the king as a political body located in time expressed in the succession of successive monarchs, while at the same time this same political body functioned outside of time as an unbroken continuity of dynastic succession. The personal king was both a single mortal entity and a singular collection of all former and future successors to the throne. The mystical federation of the king's mortal body with his communal body allowed the expression in the figure of a single mortal holder of the crown to express what was inexpressible through matter, immortal and beyond any temporal dimension. The perpetuity of the political body expressed in the dynastic continuity represented by the monarch became the closest form of empirical testimony to the extrasensory, immortal political body. The uninterrupted hereditary succession and the act of immediately anointing a new successor, expressed by the exclamation: *The king is dead, long live the king* guaranteed that the king's political body never dies. Coronation was recognized only as a decorative act, while the true legitimacy of royal power came from dynastic continuity^[31].

[31] J. Sowa, op. cit. p. 236.

NO.2 PORTRAIT, FACE, MASK. ANALYSIS OF THE PSYCHOLOGI- CAL PORTRAIT OF RULERS

› NO.^{2.1}

WHAT KILLED THE KING? THE PRESENCE OF THE ABSENT

› NO.^{2.2}

THE LIVING BODY AND THE SOLID BODY. TECHNICAL
ASPECTS OF THE WORK

Ambiguity. Can history really be considered to consist only of homologous events and characters? Is it possible to achieve complete historical truth? What criteria should be used to arbitrarily determine whether a given historical figure was a negative or positive figure in the context of his time? Is it possible to make an indisputable judgment about which monarch earned his image to be included in textbook, postings of great rulers?

History – to put it as a meticulous mosaic – does not take simple and unambiguous forms. Exploration of the past forces us to recognize that there are no absolute truths. Every historical figure, from the monarch to the pageantry, has its pros and cons. The theological and political doctrine of the King's Two Bodies, cited and recounted in the above chapter^[32], allows us to gain a deeper understanding of this phenomenon, especially in the context of Polish kings. According to Kantorowicz's theory, the king possesses both a physical body subject to human frailties and a symbolic body, representing eternity and infallibility of power. The duality of the monarch's existence, stands at the crossroads of conflicts between divine duties and human limitations, between the creation of law and its observance, and between the official immortality conferred on him and inevitable human mortality. The implication of this concept of political theology, while admittedly medieval, can provide a key to the analysis of the post of native rulers. It is in this two-layered perspective that figures such as Kazimierz III Wielki, Stanisław August Poniatowski and other Polish monarchs should be considered. Their actions, which may be judged as despotic or irrational by contemporaries, were often conditioned by the political and social background of the time. Also in psychological terms, some figures of rulers today could be classified as having mental disorders or as having been manipulated. This phenomenon has important implications for understanding history and the human psyche, as well as for the interpretation of the Polish monarchs' actions and decisions. As a result, interpretation of their actions requires contextualization within their era, culture, morality and environment, which allows for a more nuanced evaluation of their conduct. A scientific approach to history emphasizes that human nature and condition are complex and multidimensional.

Therefore, the analysis of historical figures requires consideration of their lives and behavior caught up in time and culture, taking into account the

[32] E.H. Kantorowicz, *op. cit.*

duality of their existence as thoroughly human individuals, but at the same time identified with a majestic communal body representing authority coming directly from God. Such a viewpoint can shed new light on the monarchical figures of Polish-Ruthenian-Lithuanian history. It is important in the analysis of historical discourse to avoid one-sided character evaluations that would reduce the complexity of their personalities and actions to a simple black-and-white scale. Such an analysis of the royal biographies indicates the existence of both positive and negative traits in their characters and actions, which is consistent with the universal human nature attributed to the existence of natural body in the dualistic incarnation of the King. The dismemberment of the King's character – according to Kantorowicz's theory, although never harnessed to Polish political-legal thought – helped me prevent falling into the trap of simplistic thought patterns. The present paper is not so much a philosophical-historical dissertation, but an attempt to capture in drawing form the revision of historical images and judgments devoted to successive rulers and infants of the Polish throne fixed in the collective consciousness. Its aim is to evaluate the real contribution of historical figures on history, taking into account how much of their actions were motivated by altruism and how much by self-interest, in light of the King's Two Bodies theory.

As a part of my analysis, I focus on the human dimension in the figures of Polish kings, presenting them as complex personalities with a multidimensional nature, thus departing from well-established stereotypical, even mythical images full of pathos. In their childhood and adolescence process, it is possible to observe the characteristics of every human being, such as experiencing love and hate. Stripping away the mystical body of the Community King allows to access flesh-and-blood characters, their human weaknesses, their tendency to commit transgressions or harsh misdeeds, their carefully hidden secrets, and the development of unconventional interests and habits that could be seen as eccentric even by modern observers. The analysis of historical and biographical texts draws a picture of characters permeated by a range of human emotionality, often making ludicrous decisions, who had limited influence on how their actions were recorded and persisted in the collective memory of generations. The conducted historical historiography of the Polish princes and kings, like any identity history, went through various processes of shaping historical narratives, hence this process affected the simplification of the complexity of historical events. Reviewing successive studies of historical records by chroniclers, propagandists, or writers of previous centuries, I tried to find a balance between the ideological message and contemporary studies shedding new light on the symbolic events and figures of Polish monarchical history, demythologizing and presenting them in a more objective light losing the nimbus of sanctity. This loss, was the goal and at the same time a reagent to reach a more balanced and critical perspective on the key moments and even petrified personalities that have so far been placed on historical monuments.

By analyzing the biographies of crown rulers and successors to royal dignity, it becomes clear that regardless of their social status, it reveals their human side, often overlooked in official historical narratives. Instead of portraying them as infallible, monumental figures, they should be regarded through the prism of typical human problems, vices, or emotions. These rulers experienced similar difficulties and complexities in the emotional and psychological spheres or social relations as any human being. Their dispositions, personal interests or

passions were often considered eccentric, such as Zygmunt III's love of dancing for the first governor of the Waza dynasty, or Henryk III Walezy's predilection for rather peculiar clothing, put them in a different light from the traditional royal image^[33]. The dynasties that ruled Poland, from the progenitors of the Polish state, the Piasts, to the Jagiellons, to the electoral rulers, were known for their predilection for lavish feasts and feasting, which was reflected in their health and appearance, and this often escaped in portrayals of the portrayed^[34]. Disease units of Polish princes and monarchs, must be supplemented with a rubric: mental health, especially in the context of the influence of the state of mind on political decisions and state management. This is also a significant issue in historical research. In the analysis of Polish monarchical history, there were no cases of clear psychopathic personality disorders among those holding the royal throne. However, there were some apparent cases indicative of mental disorders, including the manic states of Mieszko II, or Bolesław Śmiały^[35]. The mental state of Gnień Prince Władysław Biały is described by psychologists as a bipolar disease with depressive tendencies^[36]. The latter disorder is also classified by psychiatrists in Zygmunt August, or Zygmunt III Waza. A separate issue is the erotic life and sexuality of monarchs. The intimate lives of native magnates, including seduction and suspected sexual orientations, have been the subject of numerous discussions and speculations. In Polish history, there were covenant marriages and numerous romances, the most famous of which is the one involving Stanisław August Poniatowski. Also among the descendants of Kazimierz Jagiellon, there were numerous love affairs, despite the strict moral principles that the righteous father tried to instill in his sons. The promiscuity of Jagiellonian royal descendants eventually led to the death of three of them. In terms of sexual orientation, some rulers, such as Władysław Warneńczyk, Henryk Walezy, Władysław IV Waza, and Michał Korybut Wiśniowiecki, were suspected of being homosexual or bisexual^[37].

Among the crowned heads it is possible to find individuals who received a thorough, comprehensive education at a young age, which was the impetus for the due assumption of monarchical dignity and often became the impetus for finding a passion in all sorts of fields of knowledge. A bibliophile among kings we undoubtedly name Jan III Sobieski – the only king in our pantheon with higher education^[38]. The monarchs' interests were quite varied, if only such as art collecting, music, alchemy, goldsmithing and nature conservation. Even the correspondence conducted by Władysław IV with such figures as Heweliusz and Galileo shed light on the personal passions and broad horizons of some rulers. The role of areas beyond science and the reliance on mystical forces, including astrology and magic at royal and princely courts, should also not be overlooked. Beliefs in prophecies, horoscopes and the use of magicians by Zygmunt August or Batory, among others, and even witches as in the case of Bona, or other rulers, were part of court culture^[39].

The above telegraphic abbreviation is only a fragmentary summary of the developed analysis on the basis of exploration of various literary works, scholarly papers, or collections of stories made in the course of verifying and gathering the historical sources necessary for a reliable study. The present analysis reveals Polish monarchs as complex and multidimensional characters, with their natural human experiences and emotions, contrasted with the theory of the medieval legal fiction of the King's Two Bodies, which separates their mortal human nature from their immortal royal dignity. Using the dualistic majesty

[33] *Scandalous customs at the court of Henry of Valois. Poles were disgusted by monarch's behavior*, Internet: <https://wielkiahistoria.pl/skandaliczne-obyczaje-na-dworze-henryka-walezego-polacy-byli-obrzydzeni-zachowaniem-monarchy>, dated December 20, 2023.

[34] J. Besala, *Extraordinary Review: Flaws on kings and other stories*, Bellona, Warsaw 2018, pp. 67-84.

[35] I. Kienzler, *Quirks and secrets of the Polish rulers*, Belona Spółka Akcyjna, Warsaw 2013, pp. 13-14.

[36] *Ibid.*, pp. 54-55.

[37] *Ibid.*, pp. 147-167.

[38] *Ibid.*, p. 207.

[39] *Ibid.*, p. 10.

of the ruler as an instrument in the analysis, it states that despite official representations and images, Polish magnates experienced cares, joys and problems not unlike those of any mortal. By disposing of the King's immortal corporate body, it allowed, in my evaluation, to reach the monarch as an exemplary representative of royal power in the form of a mortal man, rather than the idealized images from museum walls and the pages of history. I used the mystical dualism of the King to reverse the azimuth of historians' analyses and evaluations of the impact of the rulers' mental state on their decisions and actions, and thus on the fate of the state. I considered the collected knowledge of historical psychopathology exclusively in the context of their psychological personality. Betting on my own sensitivity in the evaluation of the character's psychology, while at the same time supporting the academic understanding of issues related to mental disorders, I sought a deeper understanding of the impact of symptoms and signs of individual disease entities directly on the person of the king. By understanding the problem in this way, it forces reflection on the human condition.

Phantom Bodies of Kings. The Presence of the Absent – a project following the dualistic Kantorowicz concept, is a revision of the view of historical figures from the pantheon of Polish kings, questioning the established paradigm in the collective consciousness of the imaginary. It analyzes how much authenticity and value there was in these figures, and how many negative or controversial elements there were, and what conclusions can be drawn from contemporary analyses of their characteristics. I abandon the royal *corpus mysticum* to engage in an analysis of the second identity in one King's body. I question the established image that shapes historical memory and national identity. In a scientific context, reflection on historical memory and its representation in art acquires specific meanings, especially when analyzing the history of Polish monarchs. The process of reconstructing historical contexts allows to create a customized perspective for each royal figure. The aim of this paper is not to exemplify the conventional, superficial historical representations, but to create an artistic "negative" that, when fixed on paper, reveals new layers of meaning in the historical interpretation, pointing to our role in the larger continuum of history. Based on authentic royal archaeology, I try to build an interpretive layer by drawing phantasmagorical images of royal rulers and infants that express my understanding of the past. The duality of narration, real and imagined, allows for a deeper immersion into the past and simultaneously co-creates a new layer of storytelling about the past. The chosen drawing medium becomes a carrier to expand and transform the historical narrative, while reflecting on the current state of knowledge about the past. In this way, the study of the history of Polish kings and the creation of their portraits become both a historical and creative act.

Phantom Bodies of Kings. The Presence of the Absent refers to the idea of the king's two bodies – one physical and mortal, the other symbolic and eternal – in the context of images of Polish kings and their perception in history and social consciousness. This paper, *the phantom bodies of the kings*, symbolize the way the images of the monarchs were created and changed both during their lifetime and after their death, reflecting both their real faces and their posthumous, often idealized representations. The kings' portraits are phantom bodies relating to such symbolic representations of the monarchs, and these non-entity deviated from their real personalities and actions. Remaining solely a phantom representation. This represents a difference to the coined term phantom body

[40] J. Sowa, op. cit.

of the king by the author of a publication under the same title^[40], defining the monarchical power's erosion and its replacement by the decentralized polities of the nobility. In Sowa's terms, the monarchy ceases to be a source of central, unified power, but rather becomes a shell, with no real power or authority. In my explication, the phantom bodies represent the *presence of the absent*, i.e., the lasting, though not necessarily faithful, memory of the monarchs. On the one hand, the title refers to the phantom body of the king as a symbolic, immortal aspect of power that survives physical death, and on the other hand, it emphasizes that portraits and images of deceased rulers are "present" despite the physical "absence" of the monarch in question. Thus, the title of this dissertation *Phantom Bodies of Kings. The Presence of the Absent* refers to the complex interplay between reality and representation, between historical facts and interpretations. Portraits of kings become a tool in the creation of national memory and identity, rather than representing a real body.

NO.^{2.2} / THE LIVING BODY AND THE SOLID BODY. TECHNICAL ASPECTS OF THE WORK

A draughtsman must develop a special relationship between thought and creation, idea and realization, action and matter, acquisition of skill and its execution, identity and work, pride and modesty^[41]. The words of Juhani Pallasmaa – a Finnish architect from symposium broadly covering the topic of drawing and the question of its death – are perfectly in line with the process of creating portrait studies, where the draughtsman engages in advanced perceptual and cognitive activities that go beyond mere visual contours. I do not focus solely on the lines of drawing, instead I try to penetrate emotionally into the interior of drawn figure. This immersion in the imaginative space allows the creation of a multilayered image of a haptic nature, involving different senses. Thus, it is an act in which there is an interaction of external, sensory space and matter with the inner world of perception and the "exemplars" participating in it. I/draughtsman, through his tool – pencil, becomes, in a way, an integral part of the drawn figure, experiencing its corporeality, structure or temperature. Drawing the image of portrayed through my imagery, I externalize its character. The draughtsman develops a unique relationship between sensibility and its materialization, an idea and its realization. This process requires an identity of the artist with his work. Then the artist in his practice becomes an extension of his tool, incorporating the nature of materials used, which leads to the transformation of the artist into an integral part of his work. The interaction between hand in charge of the pencil as well as eye and mind is unforced and smooth, and the tool/pencil fuses the material drawing with the imagined intangible representation of the figure being drawn. This process requires a constant shift of attention between material and imagined reality, which is crucial in the act of creating historical portraits. In the context of portrait studies of Polish monarchs, such a creative process allows me to gain a deeper understanding and representation of their complex personalities and histories, going beyond the traditional reflection of the

[41] J. Pallasmaa, *Draw with the mind: pencil, hand, eye, brain*, transl. E. Klekot, "Self-Portrait," no. 4/2021, p. 4.

model's similarity. Therefore, I become the author of another layer of the story about people who came to rule our country.

I do not treat drawing as a mere reproduction of reality. Hence, I do not perceive my royal post as a record in a strictly historiographical canon. Using the words of John Berger: *If he draws from memory, he must draw from the depths of his own mind and discover the accumulated resources of past observations*^[42], I state together with him that each drawing is the result of a unique doubling of perspective, becoming a reflection of both the perceived subject as well as the personal experience and knowledge of the creator. Perception, memory, sense of identity and interpretation of the world, this makes the series of portraits represent something more than its immediate subject. The visual representation of crowned heads, but also of governors, infants who were never given the chance to sit on a royal throne materializes simultaneously as an inner vision and a physical record of the outside world. The series of royal heads is not merely a recreation of the observed reality, but is also an attempt to capture the deeper essence of the subject. I record the seemingly realistic appearance of the face, but I also strive to re-create the sense of existence of the depicted persona, expressing it in various sensory expressions. The traces of a used tool, the lines of drawing not only convey shape and color, but also bring the subject to life through texture, light and color. It is a record of the way a particular royal figure is perceived, felt and experienced. In order to preserve the initial imaginative image of individual figures, I have tried to avoid studying royal depictions preserved on historical images. The regimentation of the rulers' depictions allowed me, in a way, to separate the finished images from the mental images born in interaction with the study of the collected historical material. This allowed me to reveal hidden emotions and explore mental reality and understand the reality of the soul. Man as a living body – following the understanding of the body in Husserl's phenomenology – is an organic unity of material nature and animate nature, the building block of which is the soul. The soul represents an immaterial, intangible entity, but through its creation of the human body, a kind of sarcophagus, we can determine its location, and we can also embed the soul in time and space. Although the content of emotions is intrinsically intangible for complete depiction, the ability to communicate them through symbols is an effective means to convey deep mental processes, expressing their multilayered nature. In C.G. Jung's psychoanalytic theory, the archetypes common to all humans manifest themselves in the form of symbols or personifications^[43]. Visually formless impressions can be materialized. Concepts, which are difficult to define, can be symbolically represented visually. In this context, the study of drawing and portraiture becomes a mean to explore such abstract concepts, allowing visual representation and interpretation of complex mental processes. Although the starting point is abstract, it is rooted in reality. The lack of immediacy of the representation of a three-dimensional figure activates the imagination, stimulates the identification of a specific reality. The two-layer creation of the image of portrayed person, engages more deeply in the cognitive process, prolonging the process of deciphering the authenticity of the persona covered by layers of superficiality of the model's physical face. It strips him of the mask of historical conditions sanctioned by iconographic conventions. The idea is that the portrait takes on the role of an image that allows to capture what is hidden. It allows to present the essence of a matter conceived as a soul, which, covered with material, is unable to materialize.

[42] J. Berger, *Berger on Drawing*, ed. J. Savage, Aghabullogue Co. Cork, Ireland: Occasional Press, 2007, p. 3.

[43] T. Grzybkowska, *Self-portrait and the "mask" of Jacek Malczewski* [in:] *Portrait. Function-Form-Symbol, Materials of the Session of the Association of Art Historians, Toruń, December 1986*, ed. A. Marczak-Krupa, PWN, Warsaw 1990, p. 315.

The source of this project – portraiture – and the activity associated with it, i.e., portraiture, is more than the mere physical representation of a figure. It is first and foremost the visualization of the spiritual qualities of an individual. The royal heads, their facial representation, are the center of my activities and explorations in this center of expression, communication and emotion. This exploration is also reserved for the viewer. In the multilayer of the face, it is possible to discover the emotion that evokes extreme reactions, we can feel emotional antagonisms. We perceive the unreal similitude as an abstraction, and our process of interpreting the work develops gradually penetrating and finding the actual physicality of the face. The observer, confronted with the fragmentary, unreal elements of a drawing, is encouraged to create his own narratives about the figure, based on what has been shown. Capturing the subtlety of facial expression by not revealing all the anatomical details of the portrait subject may deviate from the canon of traditionally defined portraiture. However, it provides an opportunity for new interpretations and avoiding erroneous narratives. The transformation of portraits into quasi-dream forms becomes a process of giving new meaning to the image, where only the most essential parts of the human head are shown. The absolute reduction of color and handling of light determines the sharpness of the contours or the density of the shadow patch, but is fully dependent on the message of content. Foggy forms of imagination become visual, tactile and have a corporeal character. The form of recording the content, illustrates the imaginative commentary of the soul of portrayed crowned head. In this way, the portrait becomes not only a reflection of physical features, but also a deeper study of the psychological and emotional dimensions of portrayed person. In succor comes the science that studies the relationship between facial superficiality and character traits and emotional states. Physiognomy allows for a deeper understanding of the correlation between facial appearance and a person's personality. In the study of a drawn portrait, the observation of human physiognomy plays a key role, and the interpretation of character is based on the authentic features of an individual's appearance. Idealization of portraits of our rulers can lead to interpretive distortions, which blurs their true judgment. This "phantom" can contradict the actual character of the monarch in question, and at the same time provide a false testimony to his actual visuality. Is this the way we can attempt to interpret the past?

Each affirmation or denial brings you closer to the drawn subject, until you finally penetrate it: the drawn outline no longer marks the edge of what you see; it is the edge of what you have become^[44]. Assuming that the portrait-face is a revealed presence, as a result, the artist's hand feels and transforms the invisible, formless impulses into material form, giving them shape. Important here is the translatability of graphic and drawing language, precise, sensitive to every nuance of the complexity of physical and mental features of the portrayed person, concretized with graphite and paper. Over the years of creative exploration, I unwittingly learned – or understood – to think in black and white, to perceive the world of color through the prism of shades of gray. The absence of color does not mean getting rid of it. It is to read the color world through the full spectrum of gray. The Pythagoreans did not separate body and color. According to Pythagorean considerations, color is a property of the body, closely connected with it, just like weight, hardness or smell. They identified color directly with the surface of a subject. Pythagoras distinguishes two primary colors: white and black, and

[44] J. Berger, op. cit. p. 3.

relates their opposition to the opposite of light and darkness. Light and darkness are related to existence^[45]. Perception of the images of reality – contained in the portrait – in a monochromatic palette is directly related to thinking in terms of contrast, an antinomy taken directly from Pythagorean dualism, the symmetry of opposites, the polarized components of nature, such as good-evil, spirit-matter, or light-dark, forming an inseparable unity.

In the context of a black and white portrait, the face becomes a central element that tells a person's story. A story drawn on paper, a story written primarily in their faces. We stand straight ahead, face to face with these powerful monumental figures, or stand eye to eye with figures not from the first pages of the royal annals. Such an encounter, if it does not completely erase the distance of history, it clearly suppresses it^[46]. We see their faces, which are complex structures covered with skin, muscles, nerves and blood vessels, full of naturalness and devoid of a political body figure. The viewer's face-to-face encounter with the figure in the drawing leads to entry into a personal story. However, are we not looking at these figures through the prism of their function? The absence of full scenery, which often appears in official royal portraits, royal decoration in the form of coronation or liturgical vestments, all sorts of regalia associated with the attributes of power, allows to focus on the subject and his face. My series of monochromatic heads represents a kind of negation of the idea of identity conveyed by the tradition of royal portraiture. It treats the free subject as a kind of imaginative phantasm that resists other similar visual constructions, often based on phantom paradigms. In the context of the royal post, I visualize the freedom of the subject in an interpretation and representation of the figures in a way that rejects historically imposed identities while drawing freely on the past, resulting in an exploration of more complex and multidimensional visions of their personalities and histories. The nakedness of a face reveals details that previously went unnoticed become visible, allowing interpretation of facial expressions, emotions and subtle nuances specific to the individual. The face identifies its presence in a special way^[47]. It is a form of presence of the absent.

In facie legitur homo – the face is a sign of man^[48]. Already the Darwinian principles of physiognomy were based on a belief about the dualistic nature of human existence, distinguishing between the outer and inner man^[49]. Thus falling into a symbolic correlation with the theological and legal theory of the dual essence of the ruler. Realized through the face, the physical manifestation of the inner subject is a key means of communication. The face being a direct transmitter of messages is subject to processes of change just like the rest of the body. It is read as a natural testimony to age. The phrase quoted in the above paragraph that the face is naked quickly becomes obsolete when we obscure the face. The outer covering, whether it be a visor, armetta, theatrical or post-mortem mask, or even makeup, all serve as a means to hide the real face^[50]. To change its identity. The mask serves as a covering for the face, thus preventing the encounter with the "image of the soul," or inner image. Such a covering results in incomplete attestation of the subject's presence. It can serve as a tool for idealization, stylization of the subject himself, or creation of a non-existent reality. Such a situation reveals the cognitive dualism of the cloaked subject in question, while being absent from its presence. The face, in which one can see everything, clad in a "mask" introduces a form of mystification hiding the dark images of human nature underneath. This kind of camouflage shows us

[45] P. Taranczewski, *Color in European consciousness – a history of problems*, Internet: <https://www.miesiecznik.znak.com.pl/6402008karol-taranczewskikolor-w-swiadomosci-europy-dzieje-problemow-wokolor-koloru-i-kultury-johna-gagea/>, dated December 10, 2023.

[46] R. Solik, op. cit. p. 12.

[47] Ibid, p. 16.

[48] A. Gieldoń-Paszek, *In facie legitur homo?* [in:] *Faces, portraits, masks*, ed. A. Kowalczyk-Klus, R. Solik, Artystyczna Oficyna Drukarska, Cieszyn 2010, p. 54.

[49] Z. Zygułski, *Physiognomics and portraiture* [in:] *Portrait. Function-Form-Symbol, Materials of the Session of the Association of Art Historians, Toruń, December 1986*, ed. A. Marczak-Krupa, PWN, Warsaw 1990, pp. 20-21.

[50] Ibid, pp. 9-10.

only what we are supposed to see. Intentionality of behavior is carried out by means of props.

How to face history, which often shows its phantom face? How do we perceive the representatives of the past of Polish monarchs – whether as ideal models, monumental figures, relics of the past, immaterial figures, or perhaps as representations of crowned mannequins in succession? Or are we able to reduce their identity to the nicknames given to them centuries ago?

ABSTRACT

Le roi est mort, vive le roi! – The King is dead, long live the King! The symbolism of the King, living despite the death of the King is combined with the most notable example of royal duality – the rite of prayer initiated in France for the deceased king along with the simultaneous proclamation of the continuity of the royal throne. The lapidary proclamation expressed a complex legal and theological doctrine of Tudor-era jurists formed in 16th century England, namely the doctrine of the King's Two Bodies, which Ernst Kantorowicz thoroughly analyzes in his reflections.

The concept of the ruler's dual essence inspired an attempt – albeit in a different context – to depict the king's communal body with his physical body, i.e. an image that is a carrier of what is immortal and beyond time, in such a way that it can exist in a mortal, human body. Commemoration of the presence of absent: *What is absent from the very beginning is precisely the subject* ^[51] – Lacan claimed. Can the portrait, as a form that directly expresses the subject's presence, fully correspond with the doctrine of the king's two bodies? Building images of rulers based on the foundations of physiognomy, as a tool in an attempt to capture the duality of the human person, not only to keep the portrayed person alive, but to capture in the form of an image the relationship between soul and body. Based on the legal and mystical theory of English jurists, an attempt is made to change the medium and mode of communication by transferring the unobservable layers of personality, disposition, temperament or mental state of Polish rulers to the visual arts. To create a spiritual image of monarchs.

Ambiguity. Can history really be considered to consist only of homologous events and characters? Is it possible to achieve complete historical truth? What criteria should be used to indisputably determine whether a given historical figure was a negative or positive figure in the context of his time? Is it possible to unquestionably assess which monarch deserved to have his image included in textbook, postings of great rulers?

The phenomenon of creating portraits as a form of commemoration and confirmation of presence has decades of tradition. The visual representation of the figures of crowned heads within a portrait, visible in a historical and identity context, characteristic of the peculiarities of official royal portraits, covers a wide range of approaches to this field of art as well as to the way and form of

[51] J. Lacan, *La logique du fantasme*, quoted in J. Sowa, *Phantom Body of the King. Peripheral struggles with modern form*, TAIWPN Universitas, Cracow 2011, p. 351.

depicting the figures. The paper analyzes the history of Polish monarchs, challenging one-sided and simplistic evaluations of their figures. I argue that history consists of complex characters and events that cannot be clearly classified as exclusively positive or negative. Based on the theory of the King's Two Bodies, it is presented that monarchs are dualistic figures, possessing both a physical and a symbolic body. The evaluation of their actions requires consideration of the context of their era, culture and environment. An analysis of royal biographies indicates the existence of both positive and negative traits in their characters and conduct, which is consistent with the universal human nature attributed to the existence of a natural body in the dualistic incarnation of the King.

Precisely in this two-layered perspective it is necessary to consider the figures of Polish-Ruthenian-Lithuanian history. The paper addresses the human dimension of the royal figures, their emotions, weaknesses and problems, which are often overlooked in official historical narratives. Physical condition, mental health, education, interests and private life, shows them as a complex, multi-dimensional characters. The need to avoid simple evaluations of their characters and actions is pointed out, instead offering a more nuanced, multi-layered analysis. Indisputably, it is possible to conclude that they are not persons directly drawn from the painting reproductions of the Matejko's royalty of Polish magnates. The analysis of selected issue of the royal portrait focuses on the demythologization and objective representation of monarchs, breaking with the stereotyped, mythical images of rulers representing us successively. The dissertation required an analysis of various historical sources in order to create a more balanced and critical perspective on key moments and figures in Polish monarchical history from the first of the Piast dynasty to the last on the throne by decision of the noble assembly of the elected king Stanisław August Poniatowski. The aim of this paper is to analyze the real contribution of historical figures to history, taking into account their motivations and actions in light of the legal fiction of the King's Two Bodies. It is an attempt to capture in a drawing form the revision of historical images and judgments dedicated to Polish rulers and persons claiming royal dignity, analyzing their authenticity and values in the context of former times and current knowledge. In an effort to build a new layer of interpretation, it expands and reshapes the historical narrative to better understand and portray the complexity of Polish monarchs. The paper is not an exemplification of conventional, superficial historical representations, but creates an artistic "negative" that, when fixed on paper, reveals new layers of meaning of historical interpretation. Based on authentic royal archaeology, an interpretive layer is created, forming phantasmagorical portraits of rulers and royal infants, reflecting my perception of the past. The combination of real and imagined narratives allows for a deeper understanding of history, while creating a new story about it. Drawing as a medium is used to expand and transform the historical narrative, being a reflection on the contemporary understanding of the past.

[...] I am only a portraitist, i.e., I use the means of painting to depict human psychology [...]^[52]. The words of Stanisław Ignacy Witkiewicz fit perfectly – changing only the craftsman's tool – into the process of creating portrait studies, where the draughtsman develops a unique relationship between sensibility and its materialization. Drawing is more than a representation of reality. It is a combination of perception, emotion and skill. Rather than focusing only on lines, it is to penetrate the inner essence of the drawn figure, creating an image im-

[52] S. I. Witkiewicz, *Matter of a continuity of painting-critical nonsense. The voice of a "visual artist" crying in the wilderness* [1932], "Artistic Review," R. 4: 1949, 7-9, p. 13.

mersed in imaginative space. As a result, multi-layered portraits are created that reflect both the perceived subject and my personal experience and knowledge. By drawing the image of the portrayed through my imagery, I externalize the character. The importance of unique relationship between sensibility and its materialization in the creative process is emphasized. Hence, the royal portrait is not perceived as a record in a strictly historiographical canon. The focus is on interpreting the emotions and mental reality of figures, rather than strictly historical reproductions. Therefore, I have tried to avoid studying historical similes in order to better understand and depict the complex personalities and histories of the people portrayed, and not fall unwittingly into an interpretive carbon copy. The basic issue in the study of drawing portraits is the principles of physiognomy and the relationship of appearance to the personality and character of the subject. Using the externalization through the face of the inner subject and the observation of this phenomenon already described by Darwin to better understand the portrayed persons, a specific form of presence of the portrayed is identified. In *facie legitur homo* – the face is a sign of man. Distortions appearing in historical representations of crowned heads are the result of idealization and the creation of an unreal image, creating a “phantom” of the actual figure. In the context of creating portraits, special attention is paid to the importance of thinking in black and white. For me, the absence of color does not mean getting rid of it, but instead allows for a deeper understanding of the world of colors and a focus on what is in between. The face is a key means of communication, being a form of presence of the absent. It is the central element that tells the story of a person, allowing a multi-layered interpretation of facial expressions, emotions and character of the portrayed subject. Here in a conscious manner, the story of God’s governor is told as an ordinary man. The royal *corpus mysticum* is abandoned to deal with the mortal subject, in this mystical dualistic body of the King. Therefore becoming the author of another layer of the story of people who came to rule our country.

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