sources both familiar (Aristotle, Machiavelli) and obscure (George of Trebizond, D. M. Means); and they creatively deploy diverse literary and historical examples, from the legend of Jason and the Argonauts to the Sicilian Vespers to Shakespeare's *Coriolanus*. In short, they make for an entertaining—perhaps even inspiring—review of the democratic tradition.

Maloy wants to do more than this, however. Here, confusion sets in. The historical survey of populist democratic theory is framed as a grand contest between realism and idealism, and Chapter 2 purports to offer an excursus on the meaning of "realism" in the relevant sense. Unfortunately, this reader was less sure what the author meant by realism after reading the chapter than before. Sometimes realism seems to mean what moral philosophers call consequentialism: sometimes endorsing political engagement over contemplative withdrawal; sometimes being willing to view politics descriptively rather than evaluatively; sometimes focusing on material instead of immaterial benefits or goods; and sometimes eschewing infeasible utopianism in favor of practical reform. Sometimes it just seems to mean being a moral skeptic. These are all importantly distinct topics, however, and much clarity is lost by running them all together. Maloy's attempt to digest the tangle into two main dimensions of realism does little to help; indeed, he does not definitively state which quadrant in the resulting two-by-two table represents the sense of realism relevant for his argument as a whole.

The book purports to be a defense of "realism" in democratic theory. But who are the "idealists" against whom realism must be defended? Perhaps they are the democratic minimalists, on the grounds that they have too great a faith in the efficacy of mere elections and human rights. But, one might reasonably ask, efficacy for what? Democratic minimalists typically have modest aims—reducing the risk that masses of people will die in famines, for instance. Democratic minimalists do not need much democracy because they have no lofty aims for it. In what sense, then, can they be described as idealists? Perhaps the idealists in question are other populist democrats who place their trust in mere elections and human rights to achieve the loftier aim of a genuinely democratic political community. But are there any such naive populist democrats? While I am no expert in democratic theory, it is my impression that the populist tradition never had any such faith, and indeed Maloy's historical survey reinforces rather than challenges this impression. The intended target thus remains a mystery.

Perhaps the underlying aim is, rather, to offer a robust case for strong democracy as such. If so, the author is hoisted by his own realist petard, for in declaiming ethical knowledge and embracing skepticism in the realist package, he finds himself ultimately without grounds for arguing that populist democracy is better than any alternative. (Repeated references are made to "systemic utility" as something different from either utilitarianism on the one hand or individual interest on the other; but a more explicit definition, unfortunately, eluded this reader.) "Humans like what tastes good to them," Maloy writes on the concluding page, and thus "real democracy isn't for everyone." Apparently, his message boils down to this: If you want to fight for strong democracy, go for it—but be prepared to fight dirty.

Just how little practical guidance this offers is neatly illustrated by two of Maloy's own illustrations. The first relates the ending of the film *The Mission*, in which a Jesuit mission in South America is about to be unjustly attacked by overwhelming military forces. Maloy unfavorably contrasts the naive idealism of Father Gabriel, who denounces violent resistance, with the hard-nosed realism of Rodrigo Mendoza, who prepares to defend the mission by force. The second relates the dilemma faced by American populists in the election of 1896—whether or not they should moderate their radical platform and join with the mainstream Democratic party. Here, surprisingly, the author criticizes moderation on the grounds that realism would require not becoming too attached to any specific reforms that the Democratic Party might have helped the populists achieve. Considering the two illustrations together, it seems that realism is too malleable a notion to provide much helpful advice. Indeed, what is perhaps most revealing about Maloy's illustrations is that both describe hopeless causes, as perhaps strong democracy itself is in the modern world. One gets the distinct impression by the end of *Democratic Statecraft* that he protests his realism too much. Perhaps he is, in truth, an unreconstructed democratic idealist.

Mortal Gods: Science, Politics, and the Humanist Ambitions of Thomas Hobbes. By Ted H. Miller. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2011. 344p. $74.95.
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— Julie E. Cooper, *University of Chicago*

The project of reconstructing the intellectual currents that shaped Hobbes's thought, and the ideological and scientific debates in which Hobbes intervened, has long been associated with Quentin Skinner and the Cambridge School. As practiced by the Cambridge School, the method of historical contextualization presupposes a division of labor between historical inquiry and normative argument. The crucial task for Hobbes scholarship, on this view, is to figure out what Hobbes meant to say as a participant in seventeenth-century controversies. Contextualization allows us to understand his goals as an ideological combatant, partisans of this approach contend—but it provides no traction on normative questions that preoccupy us today. Yet as Ted Miller demonstrates in *Mortal Gods*, historical contextualization need not presuppose this strict division of

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labor. Miller exemplifies a new kind of historicism, one increasingly at home in the "broad, relatively fragmented and freewheeling constellation of curiosities of political theory as it is primarily practiced in departments of political science in the United States and Canada" (p. 1). Mustering resources of erudition toward nonantiquarian ends, he helps to liberate Hobbes scholarship from methodological constraints that have grown increasingly confining.

It is fitting that Miller issues a forceful challenge to methodological orthodoxy, since, on his reading, audacity is Hobbes's signature trait. Miller insists that we take Hobbes's God-rivaling ambitions seriously. No mere rhetorical flourish, Hobbes's description of the commonwealth as a mortal God reflects his unprecedented aspiration to "establish human sovereignty over chaos" (p. 8). Miller arrives at this portrait of Hobbes as an aspirant to sovereign mastery through a claim for the unity of Hobbes's thought. Against "phased views" (such as Skinner's) that depict Hobbes as jettisoning his early, humanist convictions for the rigors of geometric method, only to make an ambivalent return to rhetoric in *Leviathan*, Miller contends that "as regards mathematics and humanism, Hobbes had a single phase" (p. 9). As the author demonstrates, in the early modern period mathematics was a key part of humanist education and ethics. Thus, Hobbes remains within humanist traditions when he extols mathematical reasoning as a source of human power. Yet Hobbes puts humanist enthusiasm for mathematics to use "in new, more focused and aggressive ways" (p. 33). Specifically, Hobbes "invites his readers to imitate God," turning philosophy into a science of independent human creation (p. 50).

Miller couches this interpretation as a rejoinder to Hobbes's (unnamed) "scientific admirers," by whom he appears to mean scholars who venerate Hobbes as a rational choice theorist or progenitor of positivist social science (p. 3). Miller is certainly correct that for Hobbes, science aims neither to explain the workings of the natural world nor to predict human behavior. Yet few contemporary scholars would attribute these positions to Hobbes. Miller's interpretation is more valuable as an intervention into contemporary democratic theory than as a rejoinder to Hobbes's scientific admirers, who are no longer ascendant. On Miller's reading, Hobbes's political authoritarianism is of a piece with his acknowledgment of "ontological indeterminacy" (p. 209). By Hobbes's admission, sovereignty lacks foundation in God, nature, or tradition—but this admission does not weaken sovereign power. If anything, acknowledgment of "the world's chaotic and contingent nature" strengthens sovereignty, because, on Hobbes's view, appeals to artifice provide a stronger basis for obligation than appeals to nature (p. 8).

With this portrait of Hobbes as a theorist of contingency, Miller reminds Hobbes's "antifoundational critics" (such as William Connolly) that renouncing appeals to nature does not immunize a theorist against the temptations of order, coercion, and domination (p. 201). Radical democrats often assume that "exposure is a prelude to diminution" (p. 208). Yet, as the author reminds readers, exposing the artifice that lurks behind purportedly natural categories, identities, and institutions is not, in and of itself, a democratic gesture. With the reminder that antifoundational exposure must be embedded in a more comprehensive ethical project if it is to do emancipatory work, he shows how historical contextualization can help to reframe contemporary debate.

Although Miller makes a powerful and pointed argument for the unity of Hobbes's thought, there is a tension at the heart of his interpretation. On the one hand, Miller depicts Hobbes as a proud proponent of "creative autonomy" who elevates philosophers to divine stature (p. 49). On the other hand, Miller's contextualizing arguments cut Hobbes down to size, recalling his subordinate position within the Stuart court. Ironically, acceptance of Miller's invitation to read *Leviathan* as a masque-text, and Hobbes as a court philosopher, inspires doubts about "just how thoroughly Hobbes proposed to make man the imitator of God through his science" (p. 5). Indeed, if we scrutinize Miller's claims about the imitation of God, Hobbes appears more modest than the author allows.

Who imitates God in Miller's story? Throughout *Mortal Gods*, the identity of the imitator shifts. At moments, as in the passage just cited, Hobbes promises divine mastery to humanity as a whole (through the medium of philosophy). In other passages, it is the philosopher himself who imitates divine creation. Here, "architectonic ambition" is a philosophical signature: "When philosophers find chaos, in language, in heads, or in politics, their task is to set it right by stamping an order on it" (pp. 82, 79). Toward the book's conclusion, however, imitation appears to be the sovereign's prerogative. Situating Hobbes within the patronage system of the Stuart court, Miller reads his rhetorical strategies, in *Leviathan*, as an appeal to the sovereign. Here, Hobbes is a supplicant seeking to curry favor with a patron—whom he flatters with the promise "that he is to become like a god through construction" (p. 198). At this point in the argument, Hobbes appears to have been demoted from divine architect to fawning courtier. If philosophers must secure political patronage to wrest order from chaos, they are hardly God-like—because God does not need a patron. Moreover, when cast as a patron, the sovereign bears scant resemblance to Hobbes's omnipotent God, whose rule over nature is not contingent on human consent.

But is the God whom Hobbes would ostensibly imitate actually Hobbes's God? There is a troubling vagueness about God at the heart of Miller's claim that Hobbes harbors God-rivaling ambitions. Miller vacillates regarding the identity of the deity who is imitated. At times, Hobbes would enthrone the sovereign as a (pagan?) god. By granting the sovereign "absolute rule over his subjects," Miller argues, Hobbes "makes him a god" (p. 196). At other times,

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however, "Hobbes turns the sovereign into the Judeo-Christian God" (p. 199). Here, "God's sovereignty over nature, as creator," is the "implicit model for the activity of Hobbes' science" and, by extension, for the sovereign's rule (p. 5). Yet according to Hobbes, God's sovereignty over nature is qualitatively different from human sovereignty, because God's sovereignty over nature does not derive from consent. In Chapter 31 of *Leviathan* (1651), "Of the Kingdom of God by Nature," Hobbes distinguishes God's sovereignty by nature, which derives from his "irresistible power," from God's sovereignty over the Jews, which is grounded on their consent. In the state of nature, Hobbes explains, sovereignty arises by consent precisely because humans lack omnipotence. The state of nature is a state of war, which we can only exit through convention, because nature does not endow any human being with irresistible power. Thus, on Hobbes's reading, humans can approximate God's political arrangements quite closely, but their creativity will always be of a different order, precisely because it rests on pacts and covenants (whether linguistic or political). If we recall his taxonomy of divine sovereignty, the claim that he would mimic God's rule over nature proves unpersuasive.

The claim that Hobbes endorses political absolutism—the sovereignty of a mere god—lacks the drama of the claim that he rivals the omnipotent God. But Hobbes is no less aggressive, and no less bold, if the power that he seeks is a specifically human power. If the Hobbes who emerges from Miller's painstaking historical reconstruction is more modest than the author leads us to believe, this is a testament to his achievement—for he has brought Hobbes down from the timeless philosophical pantheon into the protean world of mortal men and women.

On the People's Terms: A Republican Theory and Model of Democracy. By Philip Pettit. New York: Cambridge University Press. 347p. $70.00 cloth, $24.99 paper.
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— J. S. Maloy, *Oklahoma State University*

Under ideal conditions, the discipline of political science might welcome the publication of a mature philosopher's magnum opus on democratic theory as a seminal and celebratory moment. Under actual conditions, seminal moments in the subfield of political theory have as much to do with its banishment from the curriculum of this or that department of political science as with the achievement of this or that scholar. Celebration does not come easy when levels of engagement with and support from other political scientists are steadily declining.

Philip Pettit's book is encouraging, then, in its aspiration to bridge the gap between theoretical reflection and institutional design by articulating a down-to-earth ethic of "freedom as non-domination" (pp. 1–2) and then specifying how a "rich array of popular controls over government" (p. 3) could realize that ethic. If many political theorists already see opportunities for constructive engagement and cross-fertilization between empirical research and democratic theory, *On the People's Terms* offers the prospect of affirming and promulgating that fact to the wider discipline.

Pettit's political philosophy is built on the concept of freedom as nondomination, and the first half of the book explores its ramifications for theories of social justice and political legitimacy. The crucial conceptual distinction is between noninterference and nondomination (Chapter 1): An individual may be unfree because systematically dominated by others, even when no actual interference is taking place. Liberal political theory's emphasis on noninterference, on this view, misses the forest (i.e., broad structures of power) for the trees (i.e., specific hindrances to free choice). The author further distinguishes two types of hindrance: "Invasion" involves the imposition of someone else's will to reduce an agent's choices, and "vitiation" involves impersonal external constraints on choices. His theory of social justice (Chapter 2) responds to these two threats by requiring a system of criminal law to prevent personal relations of domination and a system of welfare support to remove impersonal constraints (especially inequalities of material resources) on individuals' choices.

The emphasis on structures of power promises to make this a properly *political* theory. Accordingly, the theory of political legitimacy (Chapter 3) spells out how freedom as nondomination could be attained in citizens' relations with the state. Pettit notices the crucial point that popular *control* is something different from and more robust than popular *consent* (pp. 157–58): The latter concept, the classic touchstone of liberalism, is necessary but not sufficient for democratic power. Republican legitimacy therefore requires institutionalized popular control, or "directed influence" (pp. 153–54, 167). Popular control over the state must be a) divided among citizens in equal shares, b) unconditioned by the state itself, and c) efficacious (pp. 166–79).

Led by robust principles of equal freedom from invasion and vitiation, and of institutionalized popular power, Pettit's republicanism seems radical in the context of conventional thinking about democracy today. But the realist's hunch is that an institutional model must be specified before the theory can be fully assessed, and the second half of the book (Chapters 4 and 5) is devoted to that model. Here, Pettit's realism and radicalism decline in tandem.

Chapter 4 revolves around the distinction between "indicative" and "responsive" types of representative assembly. The author's argument is that responsive assemblies, whose members are held accountable through electoral sanctions, are preferable to indicative assemblies, whose members are chosen by nonelectoral means (e.g., appointment or lottery) in order to achieve descriptive representation (pp. 195–205). Some of the reasoning here is quite

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