terms of race)" is "undertaking a radical transformation of society by means of law" (p. 136). The properly secular state is becoming a secularist state and attempting to remake society in its image.

For the most part, Perreau-Saussine successfully distinguishes between what must, at certain critical junctures, be seen as two rival traditions (i.e., Catholicism and liberalism) of philosophical inquiry, however much a modus vivendi might be established in practice. But at some points, his primarily historical analysis of the complex interplay between them threatens to minimize an important conceptual distinction between Catholic personalism and liberal individualism. For example, the author contends that "in bourgeois democracies, the issue today is no longer between liberal and illiberal regimes. It is more a matter of which liberal regime is truly liberal. In the sphere of politics, given the choice between liberalism and totalitarianism, the church is firmly on the side of liberalism" (p. 134). While it is most certainly true that the church has committed itself to what might be called "the liberal tradition of politics," that is, the rule of law, limited constitutional government, human rights, and religious freedom, its understanding of what those terms mean is distinctively Catholic and personalist, not individualistic. The firmness of its commitment to liberalism is entirely contingent upon liberalism's remaining committed to political constitutionalism, a commitment rendered problematic by the liberal intellectual tradition's underlying philosophical nominalism and voluntarist social ontology.

At times, Perreau-Saussine attempts to distinguish this undesirable social ontology from the (liberal) political constitutionalism he favors by defining liberalism in political terms alone. Thus, limited constitutional government and religious freedom become essential characteristics of the liberal tradition, while the voluntarist social ontology that underlies it becomes a disposable distortion of that tradition. "The laicist tradition," for example, "is not really liberal" because it places too much confidence in the state as "a force for emancipation . . . from the tyranny of outmoded intermediate institutions, in particular from religious bodies" (p. 88). However, some critics of the liberal intellectual tradition, such as John Hallowell and Francis Canavan, have argued that the liberal intellectual tradition is by no means intrinsically supportive of limited constitutional government and intermediate institutions. This is so because of its *essential* philosophical and methodological individualism. On this view, laicism is not merely an unintended distortion of the liberal tradition but a working out of its philosophical premises. In other words, the liberal intellectual tradition arguably contains within itself the seeds for the destruction of the political values it originally held.

However much one might quibble with Perreau-Saussine's effort to separate political liberalism from some of its more problematic underlying premises, his essay still stands as an invaluable study of the sometimes tumultuous relationship between Catholicism and democracy in the modern world. It is all too unfortunate that, as Alasdair MacIntyre says in his foreword to the volume, we "shall never learn what he would have had to say" to critics of this important book (p. ix).

The French Enlightenment and the Emergence of Modern Cynicism. By Sharon A. Stanley. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012. 225p. $94.00.
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— Henry C. Clark, *Dartmouth College*

In this book, Sharon Stanley argues that while contemporary complaints about the effects of postmodern cynicism on Western democracy often assume that the Enlightenment had a more optimistic view of reason that we should try to recover (think Jürgen Habermas), in fact the Enlightenment had its own intrinsic and overlooked strand of cynicism. Enlightenment optimism thus cannot help us overcome postmodern cynicism. But this is less a problem than an opportunity, because cynicism for Stanley is an essential feature of real democracy. Thus, enlightenment cynicism itself, properly understood and channeled, can help revitalize our idealism and restore hope for the future of a truly progressive and revolutionary democracy.

After a chapter in which cynicism is usefully distinguished from other forms of disillusionment, Stanley draws on Diderot's posthumously published travel story *Supplement to the Voyage of Bougainville* to argue (Chap. 2) for the existence of a modern cynicism in which nature is not a standard set against convention (as it had been in the ancient school of Cynicism), but in which enlightenment criticism leaves both truth and morality bereft of any solid standards. In Chapters 3 and 4, the author discusses two eighteenth-century developments, libertine sociability and the spread of commercial society, that illustrate this newly far-reaching cynicism by their tendency, as she puts it, to "reduc[e] us all to prostitution" (p. 127). Chapter 5 returns to Diderot, this time his other posthumously published classic, *Rameau's Nephew*, depicted here as admirably exemplifying the aforementioned cynicism bred of libertine sociability and commercialism. To Stanley, however, this work also holds out the more hopeful prospect of adopting a "tactical wager," by which one may turn one's own cynicism on or off according to circumstances, always ready to embrace "sincere, collective action" where the opportunity arises (p. 154). The final two chapters attempt to apply this Diderot-inspired model to postmodern politics. Stanley concludes that postmodernists like Richard Rorty did not go far enough: Cynicism can indeed be reconciled with democracy, provided we absorb the lessons in these literary works of eighteenth-century tactical cynicism (p. 179).

Although the fascinating topic of cynicism would benefit from close and careful analysis, there would seem

to be a number of obstacles—definitional, methodological, and historical—preventing *The French Enlightenment and the Emergence of Modern Cynicism* from contributing more substantially to that cause.

The essential difficulty in writing about "cynicism" is simply fixing the meaning of the term. Instead of providing a definition, however, Stanley begins with a critique of some "basic assumptions" that she sees embedded in the recent literature lamenting contemporary cynicism. One of those assumptions is that cynicism is a "disposition" that "pervades an individual's beliefs, motivation, character, and actions" (p. 4). This is indeed how the term is used in common parlance, as the dictionaries will attest. The dubious novelty of this book is to advocate a "tactical cynicism"—a concept adapted, the author tells us, from Michel de Certeau's 1984 *The Practice of Everyday Life*—that can be deployed selectively to advance an ultimately progressive agenda. But the examples cited to illustrate this tactical cynicism (pp. 191–94) make clear that it scarcely differs from what most people would call "critical thinking" or "healthy skepticism." Through this conceptual sleight of hand, the author is able to make such arresting statements as that "reason has always been cynical" (p. 16) and that cynicism is an "ineradicable element of democracy" (pp. 181, 192).

Conversely, to acknowledge the possibility of both pure and impure motives—as Stanley's endorsement of "sincere, collective action" does—is already to leave "cynicism" behind, and enter the arena of moral judgment and individual scrutiny. That, of course, is exactly what the mainstream French Enlightenment is normally considered to have been about.

Methodologically, it is a little surprising that a political scientist would show so little interest in what practitioners in her own field have actually contributed on the relationship between cynicism and democracy. The research on civic culture and on the importance of trust to economic and legal and political institutions past and present, such as that of Robert Putnam, is neither recognized nor engaged.

This evidence-free strategy allows Stanley to paint a markedly monochromatic picture of her chosen topics of sociability, commerce, and democracy. In her account, few real distinctions need to be developed between the eighteenth century and the twenty-first, between this generation and the last, between one country and another, between attitudes toward politics and toward trade. All illustrate roughly the same spectacle of "duplicity, manipulation, and narrow self-seeking," as she writes at one point (p. 108).

Historically, the author's theory seems to be that excluded groups have mainly embraced the strategy of unmasking and denigrating the universalist claims of their oppressors (p. 194)—in other words, adopting cynicism as their means to a progressive future. There may be some truth to this for the Marxist revolutions that emerge as her implicit standard of comparison (pp. 204–5), but the opposite has often been the case otherwise. From Olympe de Gouges's *Declaration of the Rights of Woman and the Female Citizen* (1791) to the abolitionist movement of the early nineteenth century to Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Civil Rights movement, and at many points in between, a common strategy has been to appropriate rather than denigrate the prevailing universalist values, to shame the powerful into adhering to, and expanding the coverage of, their own professed principles—a possibility invisible to the conceptual schema of this book.

Indeed, perhaps the most striking feature of the book is its treatment of "cynicism" less as a subject of study than as a set of tacitly accepted assumptions on which the study itself is based. In a way, this approach recalls the seventeenth century, when Augustinians, Jansenists, and *salonnières* developed the practice of tracing all visible human conduct and affect to their ultimate roots in a secret fount of motives ending in self-love or original sin. The eighteenth century moved beyond this analytical cul-de-sac for the most part. Voltaire spoke for many when he addressed one of these unmaskers (Jacques Esprit) as follows: "What is virtue, my friend? It is to do good. Do it, that is enough. We shall not worry about your motives" ("Fausseté des vertus," in *Philosophical Dictionary*).

One way the Enlightenment moved on was by elaborating concepts such as "rights," "sympathy," "humanity," "philanthropy"—concepts that continue to inform moral discussion both popular and academic today, and that make no appearance in Stanley's text or index. Instead, the author is content to briskly condemn the Enlightenment's "failure to provide compelling grounds for its social and political optimism" (p. 179). But how her "sincere, collective action" might be forged without some such principles of human connectedness in a world otherwise paralyzed by a pervasive fear of others' hidden motives is a problem notable mostly for its absence in this book.

The French Enlightenment and the Emergence of Modern Cynicism is fluently, even gracefully, written. But defining "cynicism" more carefully; distinguishing between cynical and noncynical action in the conduct of commerce, sociability, and democracy; making cynicism a true subject of critical analysis; and engaging both the empirical and the theoretical work on it—these approaches would have been more likely to produce the kind of substantial contribution that the significance of the subject invites.

The Modern World-System IV: Centrist Liberalism Triumphant, 1789–1914. By Immanuel Wallerstein. Berkeley: Berkeley University of California Press, 2011. 396p. $68.95 cloth, $31.95 paper.
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— Aurelian Craiutu, *Indiana University, Bloomington*

The present book is the fourth volume in a projected six-volume series, initiated in 1974, that seeks to explain