"actually pursuing a communist ideal that emphasizes economic rather than spiritual renewal" (p. 120).

Jones's multimethod approach carries rewards but also risks. The project has a lot of moving parts; and while Jones succeeds at many of these parts, they are not always well integrated. For example, Jones is inconsistent about what "secular apocalyptic thought" means. At times he gestures toward what Schmitt (who goes unmentioned) called "political theology": how certain religious ideas were adopted by secular political thinkers to build their theories. Jones thus indicates that his historical cases will "illustrate how apocalyptic thought makes its way into politics and takes secular form" (p. 38). Upon reaching these cases, however, we find that none of the thinkers actually fit this description. Engels seems to come closest, "transforming" Müntzer's understanding of the kingdom of God "into a Marxist ideal" (p. 4) serving "earthly rather than heavenly aims" (p. 141). Yet as Jones's analysis makes clear, the causal arrow is actually reversed: Müntzer does not influence Engels; Engels reads a prefab socialist eschatology *into* Müntzer (p. 120). Likewise, Hobbes is sometimes described as "co-opting" Christianity's apocalyptic ideals (p. 93). But in practice, this simply means that Hobbes made theological arguments to counter his contemporaries. Indeed Hobbes, we learn toward the end of the chapter, explicitly argued for the world's final "Conflagration" (p. 113). This is an alternative religious eschatology, not a secular apocalypse.

Jones is on firmer ground when concluding that Machiavelli, Hobbes, and Engels "engage with" apocalyptic thought (p. 191); yet this raises the question of what these case studies were meant, normatively, to accomplish. Each of these chapters is illuminating. But they are also self-contained: There is a kind of whiplash upon reaching chapter 6, where the previous eighty pages of historical cases drop out entirely and the argument picks up the analytic-philosophical thread from chapter 2.

This thread raises questions as well. Jones's most striking claim is that we can "understand apocalyptic thought as a form of ideal theory" (p. 45). Consequently, ideal theory's inability to show how its utopian end-state will be reached—or even what its ultimate principles will be—speaks to a dangerous lacuna. Eric Voegelin famously referred to this danger as "immanentizing the eschaton": attempting to bring about a utopian end through direct (and often violent) human means. In response to this worry, Jones makes two moves. First, he proposes what he calls a "principle against utopian violence" (p. 183), affirming the need for hope while rejecting our ability to envisage the ideal or force it into existence. Second, he argues that "similar to religious and apocalyptic belief, ideal theory lacks plausible grounds and ultimately rests on faith" (p. 146).

Jones's claim that ideal theory and Christian apocalypticism draw from the same wellspring of faith assumes that the two are analogically similar; and here his argument hits some snags. First, most Christian (though not Jewish) eschatologies assume that human efforts alone cannot realize utopia. Redemption requires God to miraculously remove the stain of original sin. What is the philosophical equivalent of "grace"? Second, it is not clear what the secular source of hope is, or should be, for Jones. There have been attempts to reinvent hope outside traditional theology, most notably in German Idealism—though just how secular such efforts were is debatable (see Michael Rosen, *The Shadow of God*, 2022). But contra Kant and Rawls, Jones is keen to deny faith *any* basis in reason (pp. 170–74). And without God's guiding hand, it is not clear why I should prefer one utopian vision over another, or hold out hope at all. Finally, secular utopias are principally about "perfecting" political institutions (p. 3), about some version of freedom and equality. Christian eschatology is primarily about perfecting *people*, about our moral virtues and inner motivations. Analogies work until they don't. At what point are we no longer talking about the same thing?

Jones closes his book by retelling the parable of the sheep from Matthew (25:31–46). In his interpretation, the sheep—the righteous elect—serve as a model for how we might pursue justice despite our epistemic limitations (p. 196). Given the risk of utopian-inspired violence, neither ideal theory nor apocalyptic thought should provide "guides for collective action by a society" (p. 192). Like Matthew's sheep, we are better off just diligently doing good. Humility is undoubtedly an important democratic virtue. The wreckage of the last century's utopian projects still lies at our feet. One might ask, though, whether in disbarring violence, or even politics, from realizing utopia, we must also exclude *all* forms of collective action—especially in our age of fracture and isolation, fragmentation and anomie. Religion, after all, gives us resources not only for formulating the "I" but the "we"—not only for ethics, but solidarity. And among the great lessons of Jones's impressive study is that political theory has much to learn if it stops talking at religion and starts, instead, to listen.

Anarchist Prophets: Disappointing Vision and the Power of Collective Sight. By James R. Martel. Durham: Duke University Press, 2022. 368p. $104.95 cloth, $28.95 paper.

doi:10.1017/S1537592722003589

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James Martel's extraordinarily imaginative new book is a tour de force of disappointment, and I do not mean that as an insult. Indeed, this work actively aims to disappoint, in the idiosyncratic use of the term that Martel employs: it is written as a rich broadside against what he calls the "archist" *appointment* of power, the sovereign insistence that power must be imposed from without, from above, rather than allowing that political authority derives from the immanent, horizontal, and collective practices that he terms anarchism.

Martel's introduction sets the terms of his substantive discussion, which is organized in two parts, a theoretical one focusing on big thinkers and a (mostly) practical one focusing on concrete politics and the literary imagination. Part I has four chapters, the first of which describes the archist argument Martel opposes, namely that obedience to authority is the *sine qua non* of political life, and indeed of physical existence altogether. In appointing an image of law that secures salvation from death, archism, Martel argues, amounts to a political theology, and hence the canon of Western political thought can be read as a series of prophets who enjoin obedience to this unreal source of power, however ostensibly egalitarian their work may appear. Contrary to this vision, Martel proposes that political theory indulge a negative theology taught by anarchist prophets who see through the illusion of a salvific protector and emphasize instead collective, democratic agency in political life. Anarchist prophets accordingly *disappoint* by design, undoing the divine fantasy of archism.

Each of the three chapters that follow offers close textual readings of canonical thinkers whom Martel takes as anarchist prophets, often despite themselves: Thomas Hobbes, Friedrich Nietzsche, and Walter Benjamin. With the arguable exception of Benjamin, moreover, these figures are not anarchists in any normal anti-statist sense, in line with Martel's general argument that all political thought contains an inextirpable tension between the Apollonian imperative of order and the Dionysian temptation of chaos. In Chapter 2, Martel presents the monster of Malmesbury as an authoritarian well aware of the emptiness of authority, whose omnipotent archeon Leviathan ultimately hangs by a common thread of the people's willingness to displace and disguise their own collective power. Chapter 3 takes up Nietzsche's Zarathustra, in whose activities, like our own, it is difficult to prise apart anarchistic and archist urges: despite the archist guise of preaching a new morality for all, Martel interprets him as "merely assist[ing] us in recognizing the vision we have already engaged—perhaps the result of our having killed God—through the exercise of disappointment" (p. 119). Chapter 4 concerns Walter Benjamin, a thinker who represents the apotheosis, so to speak, of an anarchic prophet cum negative theologian. For Martel, Benjamin's distinction between mythic violence (in Martel's words, "the violence of projection and self-assertion, of empty power posing as ontologically based truth" [p. 126]) and divine violence parallels the distinction between archist appointment and anarchistic disappointment, insofar as Benjamin is also painfully aware of the unavoidably fetishistic character of appeals to God. After Feuerbach and Nietzsche, that is, the invocation of a *deus absconditus* can be nothing but an invocation of our own collective power. This section of the book makes for fascinating, exhilarating, and occasionally frustrating reading, for Martel's treatments tend to chafe against standard and even prima facie plausible interpretations of his cast of characters. Whatever objections one can raise in fine or even gross against particular aspects of Martel's readings (for example, in his discussions of the will in Hobbes and individualism in Nietzsche), however, their creativity and imaginative insight are undeniable, and this section of the book is highly rewarding.

The two diffuse chapters of Part II shift focus from anarchist prophets to anarchist prospects. Chapter 5 examines how anti-archism plays out in real politics and literary imaginations, with its principal referents the anarchist forces in the Spanish Civil War (or "Revolution," as Martel prefers), the Kurdish struggle for autonomy in contemporary Syria, Jose Saramago's novels *Blindness* and *Seeing*, and Octavia Butler's novels *The Parable of the Sower* and *The Parable of the Talents.* Martel's discussions of these and other subjects are far too rich to capture in a review, and readers will undoubtedly have varying assessments of their success, not to mention Martel's inclusions and exclusions. Martel's romantic view of Spanish anarchism, revolving largely around the figure of Buenaventura Durruti and critiques of "leaderism," downplays the conflict's astonishing brutality, whether its violence is considered mythic or divine (to its victims, incidentally, the two are indistinguishable). A work not mentioned, George Orwell's *Homage to Catalonia*, whose author had impeccable anti-archist credentials, gives a decidedly more desultory view. At the same time, Martel pays little attention in his discussions of Civil War Spain and Civil War Syria to the great power (archist) conflicts that created space for both anarchist experiments. The footing in the novelistic excurses is surer because the imagination has no reality to upset it, but Martel's discussions are nonetheless illuminating for the complicated conceptual dance of an/archism.

Chapter 6, finally, focuses on the conditions of possibility for the "death" of archism, which Martel associates with the ultimate loss of a need for authoritative transcendence and the acceptance of an immanentist ontology corresponding to which collective, democratic power is the be all, end all of political engagement. Spinoza is presented as the immanentist *par excellence*, a thinker who has fully dispensed with the need for archism altogether. Martel interestingly finds a real world analogue to Spinoza's refusal of exteriority in Melanesian cargo cults, for whose adherents "there is no 'outside' from which to order and hierarchize human communities. There is no special perch that is not itself part of the world, no site for an archeon to view and judge the world even as it exempts itself from that vision" (p. 224). The chapter is rounded out with readings of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* as a critique of the archist's monstrously untrue promise of immortality and the recent television show *The Leftovers* as a generative representation of life in the (non-)shadow of the loss of God. Martel sums up by writing that "without the colonizations and interpellations that archism foists on us, we would occupy our own anarchic selves in utterly different ways. Without the burden of finding out who we 'really are' or having to follow a moral law that is really just, as Lacan notes, a form of sadism, we have the distinct pleasure of 'becoming who we are,' as Nietzsche beautifully put it" (p. 255).

Martel's conclusion gestures in various ways towards post-archism, and how our political vocabulary might have to transform should we finally acknowledge that all authority is, as he puts it, "inherently collective, and actually anarchist" (p. 262). These range from the banal and symbolic, like renaming buildings dedicated to archists, to more substantive, if elusive, movements like reconstructing social space democratically through "anarchitecture" (p. 288). The reader leaves with the sense that the aim is not so much concrete political transformation as the wholesale reordering of our conceptual and hence political lives; as Martel is wont to say, after all, "life and anarchism … amount to the same thing" (p. 46).

Such an (archist?) totalizing sense is at once what makes this book at times so exciting and at times so frustrating, and even, yes, disappointing (in the common sense signification). Its vision is so broad that, a few concrete examples notwithstanding, it remains difficult to see how one might even begin, before a conceptual revolution, that is, to attack the archism it addresses. Part of the problem may be its expansive notion of anarchism; indeed, it is not clear why the language of "anarchism" rules here rather than that of, say, "freedom" or "democracy," both of which might also capture much of what *Anarchist Prophets* intends. It therefore suffers, on the one hand, from an affliction that affects much anarchist thought, namely the refusal to distinguish between better and worse real world political regimes, a blindness that in real life surely matters more than conceptual questions about archism *tout court.* On the other hand, while I take this work's aim to be different than most other "anarchist" works, it would have still been helpful to see some wrestling with the anti-statist tradition for the purpose of drawing a clearer bead on how archism might be undermined. Thus although David Graeber and Murray Bookchin make cameo appearances, we hear nothing of the anti-archist prospects of federalism (Proudhon), collectivism (Bakunin), communism (Kropotkin, Goldman), or syndicalism (Rocker, Malatesta), for example, or Bookchin's searing indictment of "lifestyle anarchism," which—with the appropriate squint —could seem consonant with Martel's own pan-critical vision, let alone, say, the "postanarchism" of Saul Newman or the abolitionist Black anarchism of William C. Anderson. Grappling with real anarchists rather than their notional prophets might have given this work more practical political purchase. These critical observations should not be taken, however, to impugn the fruitful brilliance of *Anarchist Prophets*, a work that deserves a place in the pantheon of anarchist writings, for it incisively and inventively expresses the central critique of the domineering, dominant, and often self-obscure sovereign aspiration at the heart of the vast majority of Western political thought.

Religious Liberty and the American Founding: Natural Rights and the Original Meanings of the First Amendment Religion Clauses.

By Vincent Phillip Muñoz. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2022. 344p. $95.00 cloth, $30.00 paper.
doi:10.1017/S1537592722003747

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In *Religious Liberty and the American Founding*, Vincent Phillip Muñoz offers an intriguing new argument on the meaning of the religion clauses of the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. His unconventional argument is not likely to please anyone in the heated political and legal debates over religious liberty, but this book deserves a close reading from anyone interested in religious liberty jurisprudence, natural rights theory, or originalist approaches to constitutional interpretation.

Muñoz has spent much of his career studying American political thought on religious liberty in the late eighteenth century. This book builds on that expertise, but extends his work in dramatic new directions. Although this book touches on the political thought of prominent founding-era figures like James Madison and Thomas Jefferson, the focus here is extracting principles of religious liberty from the eighteenth-century context that can be embodied in judicial doctrines and applied to the problems of today. The book moves speedily through its arguments, and is admirably clear about what it argues, what it does not, and what the limitations to his approach to understanding these constitutional provisions might be. He mostly confines his explicit disagreements with other scholars to the footnotes, so his text is particularly streamlined and focused on primary materials, whether historical documents or Supreme Court opinions. There are places where the book might have benefitted from drawing out the arguments a bit more and working through the potential objections to the points being made, but there are a lot of interesting ideas put on the table that can be considered further in future works.

The book is explicitly originalist in its basic orientation, which is to say that it is concerned with uncovering the meaning of the free exercise and establishment clauses of the First Amendment as they would have been understood at the time of their drafting and ratification. This makes his argument particularly relevant to the current Court, which