This is an attempt to understand why Carson Holloway’s book, The Gospel of Life: John Paul II and the Challenge of Liberal Modernity, so strongly emphasizes that the culture of death is tyranny. Since Aristotle, tyranny has been a political idea. John Paul’s thought focuses on culture not politics. But Holloway interprets him as saying that the culture of death is political tyranny. I had trouble grasping how that might be, especially since the ancients, and Aristotle in particular, did not regard abortion and infanticide (the central characteristics of what John Paul calls the culture of death) as tyrannical, or even as ordinarily unjust. One result of my grappling with this problem was that I came to see that Holloway’s argument was more right than not. Another result was that I came to understand that the culture of death is a new form of tyranny, one that is specifically the product of modern liberal political philosophy. A third result was that I had to ask, and gained insight into answering, how liberal modernity makes it so difficult to see the culture of death, to which it gives rise, as a political tyranny.

I. Introduction

I find Holloway’s book insightful, informed, reflective—both philosophically and theologically—nuanced, and non-dogmatic. It seeks understanding of the relationship between the Catholic faith, as articulated by John Paul II, and the modern world, as articulated by the political philosophers who created and justified it. It is therefore a dialogue of an intellectually high sort. One consequence is that it is also a dialogue of a practically decisive kind.

Part of Holloway’s inquiry tries to discover whether the dialogue is between completely hostile worldviews or whether there is some common ground on which a rapprochement might be sought.

To these ends, the structure of Holloway’s book follows the development of the thought of the political philosophers of what he calls, following an established tradition, “liberal modernity.” After the Introduction and a chapter laying out John Paul’s contrast between “The Gospel of Life” and “the Culture of Death,” the following four of the remaining six chapters are devoted to liberal modernity’s founders: Hobbes (Ch. 3), Locke (Ch. 4), Hume (Ch. 5), and the American
Founders (Ch. 6). The penultimate chapter (7), on Tocqueville, correctly presents him not as a founder of liberal modernity but as a diagnostician of its tendencies, both good and evil; and as a would be preserver, prescribing what might encourage the former and overcome, or at least mitigate, the latter. Chapter 7 is particularly important to the book’s argument because it lays out the considerable resemblance between Tocqueville’s sober and even somber assessment of democracy’s tendencies, and those of John Paul II (especially pp. 128ff).

II. The Problem of “Tyranny” in Holloway’s Presentation

Accordingly, let me begin my questioning of Holloway with Tocqueville. Tocqueville says his book is written under “a kind of religious dread” concerning “the kind of despotism democratic nations have to fear.”1 Holloway notes, “despotism, at least in its traditional usage in political theory, does not necessarily carry the same moral baggage as the term ‘tyranny’.” He correctly states, “despotism traditionally refers merely to rule by force, while tyranny refers to bad rule” (140). In a tradition going back to Aristotle, rule by force was regarded as sometimes just. But Holloway argues, “while theoretically distinct, [despotism and tyranny] are nevertheless somewhat practically related.” Given human beings as they are, “rule by force without reasonable input of others is likely to lead to abusive or bad behaviors.” Thus, following Tocqueville, Holloway suggests that despotism is likely to be “tyrannical as well.” This perhaps accounts for why Holloway characteristically speaks of John Paul’s culture of death as “tyranny” rather than “despotism.”

The relevance of the topic of tyranny is this. Fifty-eight times, by my count,2 Holloway interpretively attributes to John Paul the view that the culture of death is a tyranny.3 Yet, notwithstanding his repeated assertions that the pope regards the “culture of death” as “in substance tyrannical” because it makes government “the source of standards of good and evil, even in regard to the most fundamental rights” (65), or more guardedly, that it “opens the door to tyranny”4, it is not clear to me that Holloway makes a clear case that John Paul regards the culture of death as tyranny properly speaking. The first reason why I am not sure about that is that he cites only a single instance in which John Paul uses either the word tyranny or its cognates to describe that culture. The single quotation is that the modern state becomes “a tyrant state” because it “arrogates to itself the right to dispose of the life of the weakest and most defenseless members, from the unborn to the elderly . . . ”(p. 25).
Let me elaborate the difficulty with his attribution to John Paul of a concern with tyranny of which the single quote may be an indication. *Tyranny* is a political term, but John Paul’s single quote so describing it is a slender reed on which to hang such a prominent part of the book’s thesis. Holloway provides little explicit evidence that John Paul sees the culture of death as “tyranny”, as it would be understood to anyone familiar with the tradition of writing about tyranny, that is, as a form of political rule.

Holloway writes, “To put it simply, to embrace the culture of death is to invite outright tyranny.” “To invite,” suggests that the culture of death is not, or not yet, “outright tyranny.” He then states that the culture of death leads to “public chaos.” This seems a more likely description of the eventualities of the trends in John Paul’s diagnosis. But it would not be tyranny, although the classic texts suggest a connection between public chaos and tyranny.5

Instead, the “domination by some over others who are powerless to resist” (25) seems to be, at worst, unjust private domination rather than unjust political domination. But it is the latter that has been called *tyranny* since Plato and Aristotle. It may be that Holloway is assimilating the modern state’s permitting such private domination to the old premodern category of tyranny. If so, such an expansion of the old category might not be theoretically inappropriate. But if that is what he is doing, it is difficult for the reader to recognize. If he means to identify a new form of tyranny, arising within liberal modernity, it would help the reader to say so. One indication that he means something like that is a passage near the end of Chapter 5: “the contemporary form of tyranny that John Paul II calls the culture of death” (p. 103). Another indication, in keeping with this conjecture, is his acknowledgment that there are “more obvious forms of tyranny” (p. 105). A third indication is his contrasting the culture of death with “outright tyranny” (107).6 The modifiers “more obvious” and “outright” indicate awareness that his use of *tyranny* to characterize the culture of death is not traditional. That might explain why Holloway could find only one use by John Paul that explicitly supports Holloway’s thesis.

The novelty of “the contemporary form of tyranny” would be this. Traditional tyranny used the political institutions of the *polis*, empire, or state. In contrast, in the modern culture of death, the political order permits (it does not require) private individuals to end the life of other “individuals.” Tyranny is *permitted* by public authority but *carried out* privately. In this view, the rulers do not commit tyranny but open the door for it to be implemented privately. So the police do not knock on the door in the middle of the night and haul away the doomed
innocent. That we would all recognize as tyranny. The doomed are hauled away by their mothers, families, or caretakers.

It seems to me that what Holloway, and perhaps John Paul, may be doing is presenting such a new interpretation of “the tyrant state.” However, that does not initially come sharply into view for me, in either of their presentations of it. Instead, Holloway wishes to emphasize (correctly I think) the priority, for John Paul, of “culture” over the political. Hence, for John Paul, the political idea of “the tyrant state” is much less a central focus than is the idea of the culture of death. If that is a correct interpretation, tyranny is not front-and-center as it is for Tocqueville.

It is clear that John Paul characteristically prefers to speak of “culture,” “societies,” and “the West,” rather than use political terms like “despotism” and “tyranny.” This preference suggests that his concern is more with what individuals and cultures choose (i.e., the health of individual souls) than with what government mandates. Liberal modernity’s priorities are the reverse. Indeed, it is not clear that liberalism is concerned with the health of souls at all. Instead, it is concerned with the extent of governments’ power over individuals. Apparently, the philosophers of liberalism found the ancient and medieval concern for forming healthy souls through politics to be inimical to freedom and a seminary of intolerance and tyranny. At the very least, and giving the benefit of every doubt to Holloway’s interpretation, it emerges from his account that the pope’s political analysis and concern are subordinated to his cultural and spiritual analysis and concerns. In contrast to Tocqueville, John Paul seems less interested in the threat to liberal democracy from the political dangers that arise from the working out of its own principles.

In a private communication to me in response to the foregoing observations, Holloway granted that “Tocqueville’s concerns are more political and John Paul’s more cultural .... Tocqueville pays a lot of attention to both, while John Paul is focused primarily on culture.” But, he argued, “John Paul does offer some remarks that point us to the political and to tyranny.” He cited the one passage noted above which speaks of “the tyrant state” (p. 25) to describe its authorizing abortion. He also, more convincingly, reminded me that this reference comes at the end of a several-page discussion of how relativism (which “denies the objective truth of the moral law as rooted in God,” p. 22) leads to the culture of death because it “places humans in an essentially lawless posture with regard to each other.” The pages elaborating the consequences of this make a strong case that it leads to a way of thinking which subordinates the concept of “right” to the will of the stronger part.
Holloway grants that, in liberal modernity, “at least at first sight” this is only “a kind of private dominion, since the state permits but does not require some to kill others.” But he continues:

I believe JP II does view this as a kind of tyranny. It is not a purely private dominion, because it has been authorized by a legislative majority. Here the majority (in this case the majority of mature, post-natal humans) is behaving tyrannically because it is organizing the law solely around its own interests and not with a view to the legitimate rights of the minority. I think this would be recognizable, in principle, as tyranny even to the ancients: in book 3 of the Politics Aristotle notes that the principle of tyranny and democracy (understood here as the bad form of popular rule) is basically the same: rule according to the self-interest of the ruling element.10

The problem with this argument is that Aristotle did not regard either abortion or infanticide as evidence of tyranny. While the last sentence of the following quote shows these matters have a moral dimension (but only at the margins), for Aristotle permitting these elements of the culture of death does not constitute tyranny:

As to the exposure and rearing of children, let there be a law that no deformed child shall live. But as to an excess in the number of children, if the established customs of the state forbid the exposure of any children who are born, let a limit be established to the number of children a couple may have; and if couples have children in excess, let abortion be procured before sense and life have begun; what may or may not be lawfully done in these cases depends on the question of life and sensation.”11

Contrary to Holloway’s view that the “purely private dominion” which permits the culture of death “would be recognizable, in principle, as tyranny even to the ancients,” Aristotle recognizes no “legitimate rights of the minority” either in the deformed, or in an excess number of, children. Hence killing them is not tyranny as he understood it.

The radical difference on this matter between Aristotle and civilization influenced by Christianity is revealed by the Founding-era American scholar, James Wilson, in Lectures on Jurisprudence. “With consistency, beautiful and undeviating, human life, from its commencement to its close, is protected by the common law. In the
The contemplation of law, life begins when the infant is first able to stir in the womb. By the law, life is protected not only from immediate destruction, but from every degree of actual violence, and, in some cases, from every degree of danger.  

This seems to show that to describe the culture of death as tyranny, and a state which permits it as “the tyrant state,” requires a new post-Aristotelian and post-classical idea of tyranny. Such an idea could arise only under the influence of a moral conception of the equality of all in a right to life. Such a moral conception arises out of Christianity, even if some modern philosophers who operate within it are rather clearly unbelievers, notably Hobbes. And Holloway goes so far as to say that Hobbes “is admitted on all sides to be one of the chief intellectual architects of liberal modernity” (p. 59). Hobbes gives a non-Christian ground and meaning to the equal right to life originally instituted by Christianity on the theological grounds that we are all brothers and sisters of the same heavenly father. The new ground is psychological, namely, the fear of death, which, he says, all men fear more than anything else. This realistic ground, in his view, makes it more reliable as the basis for political life than Christian love. The new meaning is that the right to life is not an unqualified duty of every man to every other man but rather a calculation that this is the best way to bring political peace. We recognize everyone else’s right to life as the best way of guaranteeing the peace that will preserve our own right to life. But this calculation does not bind us to recognize the right to life of those who cannot make trouble for us if we do not recognize theirs (e.g., the unborn, the aged, the infirm, the unconscious).

Recognizing Hobbes as an intellectual architect of liberal modernity complicates Holloway’s “tyranny” thesis, because Hobbes himself denies there is such a thing as tyranny. What is called tyranny “in the Histories, and books of Policy,” Hobbes insists, is only monarchy “misliked.”

Holloway is correct that the ancients would see tyranny in a ruling group that ruled solely for its own advantage. But this would be grounds for seeing the culture of death as tyranny only if those whose advantage was to be sacrificed, were seen as legitimate parts of the body politic. The classical discussions of tyranny assume that those who are tyrannized over—the rich, the many, and the excellent, who are the usual objects of tyranny as they knew it—legitimately belong in the polis. The classics do not assume individuals as such have rights which justice obligates others to acknowledge and the political order to secure.

This enables us to see what is at stake theoretically in whether we can properly call the culture of death tyranny. What is at stake is
whether those from whom the culture of death has caused political protection to be withdrawn, and therefore who may lawfully be exterminated, legitimately belong in the political order.

However, if Hobbes’ argument against tyranny weakens Holloway’s thesis, that thesis is strengthened by Nietzsche’s foreseeing that liberal modernity, born out of this moral equality of a right to life but rejecting belief in the Christian God, would lead to something like the culture of death:14

They’ve [the English] gotten rid of the Christian God, and now they think they have to hold onto Christian morality all the more . . . In England, for every little emancipation from theology, you have to make yourself respectable again as a moral fanatic . . . over there, that’s the *penance* one pays. Things are different for the rest of us. If you give up Christian faith, you pull the right to Christian morality right out from under your feet. This morality is simply *not* self-evident. . . . Christianity is a system, a view of things that is conceived as a connected whole. If you break off a major concept from it, faith in God, you break up the *whole* as well; there are no necessities left to hold onto anymore. . . .

If the English actually believe they know on their own, “intuitively” what is good and evil, if they consequently think they no longer need Christianity as a guarantee of morality, this itself is just the consequence of the domination of Christian value judgments; an expression of the strength and depth of this domination: so that the origin of English morality has been forgotten, so that the highly conditional status of its right to exist is no longer sensed. For the English, morality is not yet a problem . . .15

Morality will become a problem, Nietzsche contends, when they come to realize that what they still think is good and evil “intuitively,” rather than on the basis of the New Testament revelation, is, in truth, groundless without believing in that God. Nietzsche argues that the continuing modern preference for some of the political and moral fruits of Christianity (toleration, humaneness, compassion, etc.)16 is now baseless. The only correct (i.e., consistent) inference from the rejection of the Christian God, is the natural right of the most ruthless to do as they please with the weak. Without that God, there is no merely rational basis for the duty of self-sacrificing love of all men; for
recognition of the human rights of those who cannot cause trouble for you if you don’t grant them their rights (the unborn, the sick, the disabled, the mentally retarded, the old, etc.); for political equality or for government by consent of the governed. The big ones have the natural right to do with the little ones as they see fit. The strong may take what they wish and the weak must yield what they must. Right or wrong has nothing to do with it, unless one wishes to call the right of the stronger “right.”

Clearly Nietzsche’s argument agrees with John Paul that liberal modernity leads to the culture of death. But Nietzsche sees that as progress.

John Paul and Holloway downplay the newness of the idea of tyranny they appeal to, that is, that it presupposes the equality of the right to life born out of Christianity. A letter of Tocqueville’s is helpful on this point.

In 1843, Tocqueville inquired of Gobineau, “What is there really new in the works . . . of the modern moral philosophers? By modern I mean not merely those of the last fifty years but those who immediately preceded them, those who belong to that generation which had decisively broken with the Middle Ages?” Tocqueville states his opinion: “to me it is Christianity that seems to have accomplished the revolution . . . in all the ideas that concern duties and rights.” He identifies two elements of that revolution: 1) Christianity broadened “the realm of duties” from fellow citizens “to all men”; and 2) It “put in grand evidence the equality, the unity, the fraternity of all men.” And he says explicitly that it is not clear to him that the last fifty years have added anything decisive to what Christianity brought to the world.

Tocqueville’s view here is consistent with the view that the pagan world found abortion and infanticide morally unproblematic until the triumph of Christianity. That children have a right to live, even if deformed or an excess population burden on the state, is not, to my knowledge, a conception found in classical pagan ethics. It certainly forms no part of any classical political teaching.

If Tocqueville is correct that Christianity brought about a revolutionary change in ethics and duties compared to classical antiquity, then it would have had to affect what tyranny is thought to be.

III. The Personal Impact of Holloway’s Book

Holloway’s book forced me to think harder about whether I could recognize as a kind of tyranny the sort of “private dominion” over the lives of others that the culture of death fosters and that positive law
now protects, justifies, and makes legal. At first, I found it difficult to see how it could be a tyranny that either the classical philosophers, who most comprehensively developed the idea of tyranny, or contemporary believers in liberal modernity, could recognize as such.

However, gradually I came to see that permitting private persons to kill others was merely not the “outright tyranny” familiar from the classics or from twentieth-century totalitarian regimes. The comparison to American slavery helped convince me that it at least plausibly amounts to a kind of tyranny. Slavery was also not committed directly by the liberal American political system, which instead permitted private slavery. Nevertheless, by permitting private slavery, it treated enslaving human beings as a legal right and protected it. How this differs from what contemporary liberal modernity does with abortion is more than I know. That the direct domination is private makes it not precisely classical tyranny but something new. It has in common with the tyranny the classics knew that it is publicly authorized by the ruling group (now the majority) in the service of its interests rather than in service to the common good of all. It does this, like slavery, by excluding those to be exterminated from “all.”

As I came to see Holloway as more correct than not regarding this matter, I turned to wondering why it had been so difficult for me to see that. I was helped first by recalling the introduction to the old radio drama called “The Shadow.” The title character was endowed with “the power to cloud men’s minds” so that they could not see him. He became completely invisible but was not hindered from affecting events. After much reflection, I came to think that, by calling the culture of death tyranny more insistently than John Paul had done, Holloway was pursuing a rhetorical strategy of expanding the old category to include the new phenomenon as a way of attempting to persuade at least those open to being persuaded to open their minds to the Gospel of Life by lifting the cloud.

My struggle with this problem reminds me of something Leo Strauss says near the beginning of his commentary on Xenophon’s On Tyranny:

The analysis of tyranny that was made by the first political scientists was so clear, so comprehensive, and so unforgettably expressed that it was remembered and understood by generations which did not have any direct experience of actual tyranny. On the other hand, when we were brought face to face with tyranny—with a kind of tyranny that surpassed the boldest imagination of the most powerful thinkers of the past—our political science failed to recognize it.
Assuming that I am not the only one who would have difficulty seeing this modern tyranny as such, what might account for it being so difficult for us moderns to recognize it, at least until it is outright, and thus too late? One can think of three possibilities, of which Holloway discusses the first two. 1) The relativism in which not only political science, but most educated people today, are steeped. 2) Liberalism itself, even without the attendant relativism. The thought here is that the whole notion of a private sphere, into which disputed moral matters are placed and from which other citizens are excluded from interfering as a matter of right, might preclude thinking of what goes on in that sphere as tyranny. Moral disagreements relegated to the private sphere might come to be seen as more like disputes about taste than about good and evil. This tendency might be intensified by, but would be distinct from, relativism. 3) The inventiveness of radical evil that presents itself in such novel forms that it is insufficient to merely remember how it presented itself in the past in order to identify it in its current form.

I do not find the third possibility discussed in Holloway’s book, but Burke twice makes a helpful observation concerning it:

We do not draw the moral lessons we might from history. History consists, for the greater part, of the miseries brought upon the world by pride, ambition, avarice, revenge, lust, sedition, hypocrisy, ungoverned zeal, and all the train of disorderly appetites, . . . These vices are the causes of those storms. Religion, morals, laws, prerogatives, privileges, liberties, rights of men, are the pretexts. The pretexts are always found in some specious appearance of a real good . . . Wise men will apply their remedies to vices, . . . to the causes of evil, which are permanent, not to the . . . transitory modes in which they appear. Otherwise you will be wise historically, a fool in practice. Seldom have two ages the same fashion in their pretexts, and the same modes of mischief. Wickedness is a little more inventive. Whilst you are discussing fashion, the fashion is gone by. The very same vice assumes a new body. The spirit transmigrates; and, far from losing its principle of life by the change of its appearance, it is renovated in its new organs with the fresh vigor of a juvenile activity. It walks abroad, it continues its ravages, whilst you are gibbeting the carcass or demolishing the tomb . . . It is thus with all those who, attending only to the shell and husk of history, think they are waging war with intolerance, pride, and cruelty, whilst, under color of abhorring the ill principles of antiquated parties, they

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are authorizing and feeding the same odious vices in different factions, and perhaps in worse.”

Earlier he had made the same point:

I have constantly observed, that the generality of people are fifty years, at least, behindhand in their politics. There are but very few who are capable of comparing and digesting what passes before their eyes at different times and occasions, so as to form the whole into a distinct system. But in books everything is settled for them, without the exertion of any considerable diligence or sagacity. For which reason men are wise with but little reflection, and good with little self-denial, in the business of all times except their own. We are very uncorrupt and tolerably enlightened judges of the transactions of past ages; where no passions deceive, and where the whole train of circumstances, from the trifling cause to the tragical event, is set in an orderly series before us. Few are the partisans of departed tyranny; and to be a Whig on the business of an hundred years ago, is very consistent with every advantage of present servility.

Holloway’s book may shorten the learning curve to something less than fifty years for at least some of us. After one gets by the difficulty that the classical teachers about what tyranny is did not think abortion or infanticide tyrannical, Holloway’s book helps students of the history of political philosophy see why it is at least plausible to consider the culture of death as a new form of tyranny.

IV. A Concluding Speculation

Notwithstanding the instructive and provocative potential of Holloway’s book, I wonder whether it will be widely read or appreciated by Catholic scholars? What might stand in its way?

Holloway’s emphasis on “liberal modernity” emerges from a careful and intransigent interrogation of major thinkers in the history of political philosophy. The advantage of this approach is that it enables him and us to initially understand that modernity by permitting it to reveal its self-understanding, as distinguished from what John Paul believes it ought to be. After giving it that opportunity, he can then present John Paul as engaging that modernity critically, in the most convincing way. To a considerable extent, Holloway does not stand
outside modernity and critique it on grounds foreign to it. We owe him a debt of gratitude for risking his soul, and his peace of mind, by spending so many hours gazing, if not quite into the abyss, at least into its antechamber. He has done something it is worth our while to benefit from, especially since his work spares us from risking our souls to the same extent.

However, it is my experience that few Catholic scholars are interested in understanding the modern liberal ethical and political world from the inside and as it understands itself. Few study sympathetically, as Holloway has done, the thought of the political philosophers who founded and gave direction to liberal modernity. Instead, most study and critique it from what Holloway (and I) would say is the “outside”: for example, from a Thomist perspective (on the understanding that Thomas’s thought is not part of liberal modernity). To some extent, that disinterest is understandable, since to get inside means spending time in direct contact with ideas that are abhorrent, even soul-searing, to believers. It is also likely only to persuade those outside that context. By not remaining within that context, Holloway’s book has at least some chance to persuade those who inhabit the modern world.

There is a second reason why Catholic scholars may find Holloway’s book uncongenial, namely, that it traces liberal modernity to a break, not only with the Catholic Middle Ages but also with Protestant early modernity. That is, Holloway believes the modern philosophers understand their liberal project as a rejection or secularization of Christianity. But there is, in Catholic scholarly circles, sympathy for the view that liberal modernity is an outgrowth of—and hence more compatible with—Christianity, than Holloway’s account of it suggests. To the extent that view is held, Holloway’s reading may be objected to root and branch. That would be a shame. For Catholic thinkers have much to learn (as I did) from Holloway’s account of the encounter between the thought of John Paul II and liberal modernity. But that requires understanding liberal modernity first, on its own terms.
Notes


2. At least the quantitative importance of this number can be ascertained from the fact that the book contains 158 pages of text, plus 30 pages of notes.

3. The pages are as follows. On pages with more than one use, the number of uses is in parenthesis. P. xi, 22, 54 (3), 55 (2), 59, 61, 65 (3), 80 (3), 81 (5), 82, 96, 97 (3), 101 (2), 102 (3) 103, 105, 107, 109 (2), 112, 116 (2), 139 (6), 140 (4), 141 (6), 155 (3), and 176.

4. I find such assertions on pp. 54, 59, 65, 80, 82, 103, 105, 107, 109, 139, and 155.


6. Holloway sometimes acknowledges that “unjust” laws are not necessarily “tyranny.” (109) So his conception of tyranny clearly goes beyond “unjust.”

7. The scare quotes are to acknowledge that the cases are different. Clearly individuals are exterminated in infanticide and euthanasia and at least arguably, though not indisputably, in abortion.

8. According to John Courtney Murray, this emphasis on culture rather than on government is part of the medieval inheritance of Christian thought.

“A second principle underlay these free institutions—the principle that the state is distinct from society and limited in its offices toward society. This principle too was inherent in the Great Tradition. Before it was cancelled out by the rise of the modern omnicompetent society-state, it had found expression in the distinction between the order of politics and the order of culture, or, in the language of the time, the distinction between studium and imperium. The whole order of ideas in general was autonomous in the face of government; it was immune from political discipline, which could only fall upon actions, not ideas. Even the medieval Inquisition respected this distinction of orders; it never recognized a crime of opinion, crimen opinionis; its competence extended only to the repression of organized conspiracy against public order and the common good.” We Hold These Truths: Catholic Reflections on the American Proposition (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2005) p. 36. (Note: This page number is not to the edition cited. It is from an online version.)

9. For a helpful discussion of this question see Peter Berkowitz, Virtue and the Making of Modern Liberalism (Princeton: Princeton University
13. Leviathan, Part I, Ch. XIX, para. 2.
14. Holloway neither calls Nietzsche to support his analysis nor cites Nietzsche at all, as far as I can see.
16. The liberal political philosophers Holloway discusses, unbelievers though they may have been, desired to keep these fruits of Christianity. Nietzsche regarded this desire with scorn.
18. On pp. 22ff, Holloway suggests that John Paul points to the culture of death as even closer than this to “outright” tyranny that everyone would recognize as such. As the materialism, hedonism, and relativism by which abortion is justified are gradually more fully embraced, they lay the cultural and moral groundwork for “outright tyranny” by undermining the principles (e.g. the natural right to life) and mores (sexual self restraint, affection for the unborn, the priorities of duties to others over our own pleasure and convenience) on which it could be diagnosed and resisted. This might explain John Paul’s greater emphasis on culture than on politics. The real barriers to outright political tyranny are those cultural principles and mores.


23. In the study of the history of political philosophy, Catholic scholars tend to find Locke, for instance, to be a Christian thinker.