

grounds alone, without having to appeal to Muslim ones at all, the cartoons should not have been published. While liberty might give one license to publish something inflammatory, fraternity calls for trying to improve relations among citizens, not inflame them. Moreover, they argue well, the cartoons were racist and so could be banned as instances of hate speech.

Kymlicka continues his impressive and influential work on multiculturalism in his latest book, which explores how international governmental organizations can and should promote multiculturalism in a way that will help national minorities, indigenous peoples, and immigrant groups. Part I describes how state–minority relations have been, since World War II, internationalized. Part II focuses on liberal multiculturalism, the forms it takes, the conditions that are necessary, and how it is faring in practice. Part III reflects on the paradoxes found in the experiments to instantiate liberal multiculturalism in Europe and globally.

This is a rather personal book in which the author confesses the tensions he has experienced as a much-consulted academic expert in the crucible of attempts to decide whether to support a good-enough policy that might actually be adopted at the expense of working for a better policy that might never prevail. A good example—though this is hardly Kymlicka’s central focus—is the problem of securing protection for immigrant groups in Europe: whether to secure them under the existing protocol, the Council of Europe’s Convention for the Protection of National Minorities (FCNM), which really is not suited to the needs of immigrants, or to create a new document that would expressly protect immigrant groups but in the current climate does not stand a chance of being adopted (pp. 223–25).

The reason for the problem is, of course, that in Europe, Muslims make up 80% of immigrants and their presence, given recent events, destroys what he says are two of the five preconditions necessary for liberal multiculturalism to flourish: the “liberal expectancy” and the “desecuritization of ethnic relations” (pp. 122 and 155). Kymlicka finds this all to be unfortunate, and he hopes the situation will improve, but he does not give an adequate analysis of whether Muslim immigrants pose a threat to liberalism or security or what might be done to promote multiculturalism precisely when it is needed most (p. 127).

The Ironic Defense of Socrates: Plato’s Apology. By David Leibowitz. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010. 204p. \$80.00.
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— Christina Tarnopolsky, *McGill University*

Plato’s *Apology of Socrates* has captivated readers for centuries because of its vivid portrayal of the tensions between Socratic philosophy and Athenian democracy, as well as its evocation of the heroic and noble, yet puzzling, ironic,

and even insolent character of Socrates. David Leibowitz’s marvelously rich commentary on this dialogue, *The Ironic Defense of Socrates: Plato’s Apology*, shines new light on all of these issues. Moreover, the insightfulness with which Leibowitz approaches these issues makes his book a superb introduction for those approaching the dialogue for the first time, and indispensable reading for scholars who have pored over it countless times before. According to Leibowitz, a proper understanding of the character and scope of Socrates’ irony in the *Apology* has allowed him to reach “unconventional conclusions about his teaching on virtue, politics, and the gods, the significance of [Socrates’] famous turn from natural philosophy to political philosophy, and the purpose of his insolent ‘defense speech’” (p. 1). Finally, he argues that his interpretation of the *Apology*, and the Delphic oracle story in particular, offers a key to understanding the Platonic corpus as a whole (p. 1).

For Leibowitz, the complexity of Socratic irony arises from the fact that there are a number of different audiences that Socrates is addressing throughout the *Apology*, and a number of different strategies that he employs (p. 17). Socratic irony has a twofold purpose and a twofold audience: conciliation of, and protection from, the unpromising members of Socrates’ audience, and education of the promising members in the audience (pp. 17–18). Irony, in the sense of self-depreciation and even flattery, is necessary for the first audience so that Socrates will be less offensive to them and more in tune with their moralistic views of the world. These views, while ultimately false, are nonetheless powerful and persuasive to *these* men. Irony in the sense of speaking in a “double” fashion is necessary for the second audience because even “they start off under the spell of vulgar prejudice” (p. 18). Thus, Socrates must speak in a way that will be understood by them, first in the vulgar way, but then in a very different way upon reflection, and he can do this by employing certain contradictions, odd remarks, jokes, or ambiguous expressions in his speech (p. 19).

Leibowitz’s treatment of Socratic irony shares important resonances with Leo Strauss’s, as well as with Strauss’s notion of exoteric writing as a form of writing that can say two different things to two different audiences (e.g., see *The City and Man*, 1964; *Persecution and the Art of Writing*, 1952). However, Leibowitz’s treatment goes beyond Strauss’s in two important respects: first, it clarifies the *complexity* of Socrates’ ironic strategies, especially with respect to the unpromising members of his audiences; and second, it articulates the posthumous character of Socrates’ irony in the *Apology*.

For Leibowitz, Socrates’ irony works posthumously in two different ways. For the promising young, his riddles will be remembered and reflected on so that they can learn the truth about his way of life and his natural scientific investigations for themselves. And his greatness of soul will linger on in their memories as a lasting lure for them

to follow in his footsteps and pursue philosophy (p. 157). For the moralistic and unpromising Athenians, it will serve as a bitter pill, or rather a pill that begins to taste more bitter over time, as they eventually repent of their condemnation of a man who was obnoxious and annoying, but nonetheless brave and concerned with virtue (p. 156). While this repentance will come too late to protect Socrates himself, it nonetheless serves the purpose of protecting his surviving philosophic friends from the wrath of the unpromising, because it causes them to be disgusted by the prospect of doing the same thing to other philosophers, or alternately, to admire the “nobility” of philosophy (pp. 157–59).

What then are the unconventional truths that Socrates wants to convey to his careful and promising listeners? The first concerns the necessity for lying in politics, especially when the philosopher is presenting himself to the many who rule in a democracy like Athens (pp. 8–14). This is because the men of Athens are corrupt and unjust, and therefore do not possess the ability to judge Socrates’ justice, and yet telling *this* truth to them would be a hopeless defense strategy (p. 16).

Second, although Socrates denies engaging in natural science, he actually hints that this is exactly what he might have done as a young philosopher, and he suggests that these investigations *were* impious because they do investigate the gods and attempt to substitute necessity for divine will (pp. 43–52). However, Socrates also wants his promising listeners to know that he had discovered the limits of natural science: it rests on *faith* in the power of reason (pp. 66–67). Thus, Socrates’ famous turn to political philosophy and to conversations about virtue was an attempt to gain knowledge about virtue, and to answer the question of whether or not there are gods (p. 71).

Third, these conversations suggested to Socrates that people’s beliefs about the gods do not generate their beliefs about human morality, but rather that people’s human moral beliefs generated their beliefs in the gods, “including the belief that they have had *contact* with gods” (p. 72). Socrates’ examinations, and the perplexity they produced, allowed him to trace people’s beliefs in divine experiences back to certain natural sources: longings, softness of soul, anger, or confusions about the noble (p. 87, pp. 127–28). Thus, Socrates’ riddling remarks about his own “human wisdom” and “knowledge of the erotic things” (p. 98) actually conveys to his careful listeners a teaching about the impossibility of nobility and the gods as these are conventionally understood, and the fact that they rest on certain natural longings or confusions, which can be explained using reason.

Fourth, while the conventional understanding of virtue treats it as something that is primarily self-sacrificial, philosophic virtue is primarily for the good of the philosopher and only secondarily for the good of others. Socrates spent most of his life searching for exceptional companions, and

only as his death approached did he take on the task of defending philosophy and his friends from the anger and moral indignation of the city of Athens (p. 159). While the conventional understandings of justice treat it as the active pursuit of doing good to others, Socrates’ justice consists in his refutations *of* these commonsense views of justice, not his “super-moral” and merely flattering exhortations *to* this conventional type of justice (pp. 142–51).

Fifth, while the unpromising members of the jury, and many readers of Plato’s *Apology*, see Socrates as a courageous philosopher akin to Achilles, Socrates really believes that the difference between his courage and that of Achilles lies in the fact that his does not rely on fear or terror (p. 182), or any hope concerning the “things in Hades,” but rather on resignation to what cannot be changed, and this is a far more admirable and genuine toughness than the one exhibited by Achilles (p. 142).

Finally, according to Leibowitz, Socrates’ riddling description of his elenchic examinations of the poets, craftsmen, and politicians, encapsulated in his Delphic oracle story, is the key to solving Plato’s most important puzzle: i.e., whether philosophy or divine revelation is the highest life. Although Plato provides pieces of this puzzle throughout his dialogues, he never clearly shows his answer to it because Socrates is never presented as refuting someone who claims to have had a divine experience. “Only here [in the *Apology*] does he indicate that virtue or morality is the ground—the ground common to philosophers and those with ‘divine’ experiences—on which Socrates tries to vindicate the possibility of philosophy” (p. 92n64). Although Socrates’ examinations of others’ opinions about justice and morality were never able to rule out the possibility of revelation from an amoral, willful, or radically mysterious god (p. 95), they were able to show that his interlocutors’ moral beliefs were always false (p. 96). This is because these beliefs presume the existence of “high” things that are inconceivable, and because “at the core of all moral experience and belief is a confusion about motivation: although the moral man thinks he does moral things chiefly for their own sake—or for the sake of the noble—in truth, he not only expects, but ultimately demands, that morality be good for himself” (pp. 96–97). Socrates thus hints that his investigations had come to show him that the conventional understandings of justice, nobility, virtue, and the gods are contradictory and impossible to live by (pp. 57, 96–97, 178–79).

Leibowitz’s book is ultimately intended to get his readers to reflect on whether the problems that Socrates outlines concerning conventional morality and democratic politics might still be true for them today (p. 24). In doing so, however, he implies that Socrates’ irony, directed at flattering the unpromising and educating the promising members of his audience, is ultimately necessary because of the limitations of his or any democratic audience. As Leibowitz puts it, “What is democracy, then, but rule by

many tyrants” (p. 77)? Similarly, he argues that Socrates’ statement that the few rather than the many are experts in training horses is his oblique way of suggesting, “Democracy is rule of the incompetent” (p. 118). But, as scholars like Peter Euben, Arlene Saxonhouse, Sara Monson, and Jill Frank have shown, these negative characterizations of democracy were in fact criticisms that the Athenian democrats often lodged against *themselves*, and Leibowitz’s book would have benefited from more engagement with this literature. According to these scholars, democratic orators were worried that, especially during the Peloponnesian War, Athenian assembly debates had degenerated into flattery and mere conciliation of one another’s unreflective prejudices and desires, rather than a deliberation on and critique of them. This suggests that Socrates and Plato may also have been immanent critics of a corrupt, imperial Athenian democracy, and were not necessarily anti-democratic thinkers.

Strauss’s teaching about exoteric writing, which communicates different messages to the promising and unpromising members of one’s audience, can seem antidemocratic, but this is only if democracy is understood as rule by the incompetent, as Leibowitz ultimately wants to suggest. However, Strauss’s teaching is less antidemocratic if we understand democracy both in Athens and today as allowing for differences in competency, and as defined by its ability for self-critique, in which the best ideas triumph through deliberation and critical reflection on one another’s unreflective prejudices and desires. In other words, Socrates’, Plato’s, and Strauss’s ultimate teaching might be that their distinctions between unpromising and promising audiences is a distinction between the pre-reflective and post-reflective understanding of virtue and politics that democratic citizens bring to and then carry away from their deliberations. And if this unpromising reviewer has understood anything of this ultimate teaching, then there is hope for us all.

The Time of the City: Politics, Philosophy, and Genre. By Michael J. Shapiro. New York: Routledge, 2010. 232p. \$145.00 cloth, \$36.95 paper.
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— Michael J. Thompson, *William Paterson University*

As an object of study for political theorists, the city is a latecomer. With their clustering of themes of time, space, culture, power, pluralism, inequality, exploitation, and alternative subcultures, cities have attracted other branches of the social sciences since the early nineteenth century. Michael J. Shapiro’s book is less in the tradition of more classical thinkers, such as Georg Simmel, Friedrich Engels, or Ferdinand Tönnies, and derived much more from “cultural studies,” attempting what he refers to as a “poetics of the city.” Maurice Blanchot and Jacques Rancière no less than Gilles Deleuze and Henri Lefebvre are drawn upon

to construct a theoretical frame to rethink the “political” through the lens of cinema.

The basic contention of the book is that through an analysis of cinematic portrayals of urban life, we can glimpse the various ways in which politics affects the everyday lives of individuals. Shapiro sees the mainstream literature in urban politics, from Robert Dahl’s (1961) *Who Governs?* and Floyd Hunter’s (1953) *Community Power Structure*, as concentrating on issues of community, a “narrow (often de Tocqueville-inspired) participatory model of politics,” as ignoring “[t]he struggles of marginalized people to manage their life worlds and the rhythms of moving bodies” (p. 4). Rather than seeing the city and the politics of urban space as a node for community and civic life, Shapiro’s reading emphasizes the divisions, the power relations, and the fault lines of fragmentation as crystallized in the actions and practices of everyday life.

For Shapiro, cinema is a means for analyzing the effects of urban space and power relations on marginalized groups; we come to glimpse this micropolitics through the representations of the genre of film. From Rancière, he takes the argument that the arts have the capacity to reframe experience, rendering “thinkable aspects of politics that have often been ignored” (p. 4). The politics of institutions, of the large-scale strata of social life, are juxtaposed against the “micropolitics of everyday life,” a means to “generate ways to think ‘the political’” (p. 4). Marginalized groups need to work within the constraints of power that are articulated by the institutional structures of urban space and the logics of their reproduction. The central aim here is to establish a link between knowledge and art, the ability to derive knowledge about politics from different forms of experience we see playing out before us. The critical edge of this project, as Shapiro sees it, is to achieve a “poetics of the city, a series of interventions that figure the city by composing encounters between artistic texts and conceptual frames (effectively art-knowledge encounters)” (p. 24). The concept of “poiesis” is therefore central: It denotes the creation of alternative ways of experiencing and knowing. Film thus becomes a way to “illuminate aspects of the actual encounters that constitute the micropolitics of urban life worlds” (p. 24).

Cinematic portrayals of the modern city can be seen to depict the experience of the fragmentation between social groups and their life worlds brought about by the spatial articulation of power. In his reading of Walter Mosley’s film *Devil in a Blue Dress*, Shapiro shows how the representation of the body of the main character, Easy—an African American in Los Angeles—changes his movement and body language as he moves through different urban spaces. The spaces of difference reflect themselves in the body movement and language of the character. When dealing with the plant foreman, Mr. Giacomo, “Easy stands stiffly at attention, literally with hat in hand, as he tries unsuccessfully to convince Mr. Giacomo to give him back