

ABSTRACT

In this Dissertation I analyze different liberal answers to *diversity* understood as a fact that marks liberal democratic societies. Afterwards I defend what seems to be the most appealing form of liberalism.

In the **First Chapter** I work out a list of four different liberal theories. Considering the way in which a theory is justified, I draw a distinction between *comprehensive* and *political* liberalism. Then, looking at the value each theory assumes as fundamental, I distinguish between *pro-autonomy* and *pro-toleration* liberalisms. Combining these two distinctions, I obtain four kinds of liberal theories, as the following table illustrates:

Fundamental value→ Justification ↓	Autonomy	Toleration
Political	PA	PT
Comprehensive	CA	CT

In the Second and Third Chapter comprehensive liberalisms are rejected, both in the *pro-autonomy* (CA) and in the *pro-toleration* (CT) version.

In the **Second Chapter** Will Kymlicka's multicultural liberalism is considered as an example of CA. He tries to elaborate a distinctively liberal theory of minority rights assuming individual autonomy as the core value. The acceptance of autonomy as a comprehensive ideal narrowly rules accommodation claims and protection of minority cultures. Kymlicka's liberalism fails in accounting for all those individuals and groups that live in liberal society but refuse the idea that human flourishing is necessarily connected with autonomy. Further, his approach cannot adequately account for the integration of migrants.

In the **Third Chapter** CT liberalism is discussed through William Galston's work. Galston maintains that liberalism is not about the promotion of autonomy but about the protection of diversity. Thus his liberal pluralism discards the view that liberalism should necessarily favour and

uphold autonomous lifestyles. Galston's *diversity liberalism* is more fulfilling in accommodating diversity than Kymlicka's theory, but his commitment to *value pluralism* turns out to be highly problematic. I argue that the compatibility between liberalism and value pluralism is not beyond dispute and that value pluralism can condone illiberal outcomes. This is showed through the analysis of Galston's thoughts about educational policies.

With the **Fourth Chapter** I pass to discussing political liberalism. The politicization of liberalism appears an interesting move towards a more adequate accommodation of diversity. Stephen Macedo's is considered as an instance of PA. Macedo, along distinctively Rawlsian lines, works out a political liberalism whose justification is independent from comprehensive doctrines. In this sense it is more accommodating of extant diversity than comprehensive liberalisms (at least at philosophical level). Macedo emphasizes the role of civic virtues and admits the primacy of the value of autonomy understood as a *political* notion. His liberalism acknowledges the transformation of collective identities according to civic ends that are politically set. I argue that this attempt is unable to see the ways in which an authentic inclusion of diversity implies a reciprocal transformation of liberal societies and of liberalism itself.

In the **Fifth Chapter** I state that the accommodation of diversity requires a liberalism that is both *political* and *pro-toleration*. Authentic accommodation calls for a *constrained* inclusion of different groups in the mainstream society. Liberalism can carry out this task only renouncing to the view that liberal values should rule also the internal life of non-liberal (but still respectful of human rights) associations and accepting a justification for political institutions reducing to the minimum its moral commitments. Chandran Kukathas' position is assumed as an illustration of PT liberalism. Kukathas defends a very minimal form of liberalism which does not acknowledge a significant role to the unity of the state. I try to emend this position showing that his representation of society as an archipelago of different communities can be misleading and cannot see the relevance of those obligations arising among groups and individuals.