EMBRACING CULTURAL DIVERSITY:

MULTICULTURALISM AND ALTERNATIVE THEORIES OF INTEGRATION

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INTRODUCTION

Multiculturalism started to manifest itself in the political realm after the 1980s. There are two main events that triggered the rise of multiculturalism: firstly, after the fall of communism in Eastern Europe, nationalism has become the prominent element of the democratization process. Secondly, a new wave of nationalism has risen among some groups in Western democratic countries. It has been observed that even the Western states that built on liberal values could not completely overcome the problems regarding ethnic and religious groups in their societies. Now, we live in more and more diversified and multicultural societies where immigration and minorities have been an imminent part of the debates of everyday politics for a very long time. The politicians include their views and policies in their electoral campaigns, surveys are held to get more information about public opinion and more importantly political theorist are looking for new ways and perspectives as coping or integrating strategies. For instance, the question of the illiberal minorities and the risk of them to violate the liberal principles was always there as a problematic and debatable one. Thus, this case brings us two important questions to discuss: To what extent should we protect the minority rights and how should we recognize the minority identities? For many, it is an undoubtedly accepted fact that liberal state should be neutral but what should be the attitude of this neutral state when it comes to the clash between the values of majority and minority?

If we ever need to take one thing for granted in liberal state, it would be the strong idea that each individual should have the necessary rights and opportunities to follow the ways which lead them to a good life. Moreover, individuals should be free while deciding on their own understanding of good life and should pursue their goals freely. Therefore, this principle requires that individuals who are coming from different backgrounds from the majority and having different religious and cultural customs and values should also pursue their understanding of good life without giving up their own. Another important aspect of liberal ideology concerning individual rights is that no state or government has the right to conceptualize a project of good life and impose it upon its citizens.[1] However, can liberalism and multiculturalism live together?

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[1] Kukhatas, C. (1992), *Are there any cultural rights?* Political Theory 20(1): pp. 105-139

Moreover, is multiculturalism the only valid integration paradigm which liberal states can make use of?

I will start chapter one by assessing a definition multiculturalism and how it deals with cultural diversity. Then, I will explore the relationship between multiculturalism and liberalism, analyse the compatibility of the latter within the frame of minority rights and explain Kymlicka's theory of 'differentiated citizenship' and how he manages to accommodate multiculturalism in a liberal perspective.

In chapter two, I will provide the reader with the wide theoretical framework offered by post-liberal multicultural theories and I will show their understanding of cultural diversity as possible only with the overcome of liberal principles. Finally, in chapter three I will focus on the Québec case, precisely on the role of the Taylor-Bouchard Commission in the occasion of the establishment of the Consultation Commission on Accommodation Practices Related to Cultural Differences and on their contribution in illustrating an alternative theory to multiculturalism embodied by the intercultural model of integration.

CHAPTER ONE

LIBERALISM AND MULTICULTURALISM

1.1 Defining Multiculturalism

All across Western liberal democracies the term 'multiculturalism' is of common spread since more or less 50 years. Indeed, since the '60s the presence of different ethnical and cultural groups within one nation state in countries such as Australia and Canada, has been of central attention in the political debate. The main focus of this debate is: which is the correct position institutions should take toward cultural diversity? For some it would be the acknowledgment of cultural plurality and its empowerment through correct public policies which could reflect the requests of those citizens in terms of group-belonging, for others it would be the implementation of those policies of minorities' assimilation so that they would completely mingle with the majority.

Canada adopted the way of cultural diversity's recognition in 1971 when PM Pierre Trudeau officially adopted multiculturalism as public policy with the aim to promote cultural minorities and to include them in the public space as equals to the majority. In the next decades the Canadian multiculturalism had its effect in other western democracies even though it was modified according to the different contexts of application. Nonetheless, in recent years the attitude towards multiculturalism has dramatically changed also because of the socio- political environment which the events of 11/01 have generated. In this realm much has been said about the failure of multicultural politics. What came out of this was the perception that the recognition of cultural diversity, instead of bringing integration, had produced the isolation of cultural minorities, with the major consequences which went from religious radicalism to terrorism.

During the years, the term multiculturalism has been used to point out a plurality of matters, from the post-colonial issues, to the LGTB community issues. Also, the focus has been differentiated, from national minorities' rights to immigrants' rights. Finally, some theorists saw multiculturalism as a theory which reveals the limits of the liberal principles when talking about the living conditions of indigenous groups or

the post-colonial social contexts. For these reasons, to define multiculturalism is not an easy job, and most of the time a single non-controversial meaning cannot be assessed as universally acceptable.

In his book "Multiculturalism, a short introduction" (2015), Melidoro defines multiculturalism as a "matter of fact". According to him, cultural diversity is simply a characterizing fact of the contemporary liberal democracies. Indeed, in a society which traditionally grants freedom of thought, association and expression, the presence of different cultural groups is an easy phenomenon to observe.[2] In fact, if granted so, individuals tend to build up multiple groups which, if allowed so, will distinguish themselves from one another in terms of beliefs, traditions and values. If we also consider the presence of immigrants which bring their own values, and the annexation of national minorities to already existing nation states, cultural diversity increases even more. However, what do we talk about when we mention the term 'culture'? According to Melidoro (2015), culture indicates a system of practices and beliefs within which a group of people comprehends, regulates and structures their individuals and collective lives; or, as Parekh argues, culture is a way of understanding and organising human life.[3] As intended, a cultural group, is understood as a group of human beings who share the same culture which will partly be different from the one which distinguishes other groups. In these terms, a cultural group is stuck together by its own culture, and it's sharing of this common culture which makes the identification of the group possible. The author stresses that cultures and cultural groups must not be perceived as unchanging entities. Indeed, cultures are fluid and always subject to change in response to the evolution of new circumstances.

The assumption that diversity is a pure fact in our societies has major consequences. In fact, this assumption implies that cultural diversity is a circumstance which institutions have to consider and to which they have to give answers. If diversity was more than a factual situation, namely a value to pursue, the institutional approach would inevitably be different.

Melidoro (2015) considers as multicultural those theories which try to answer to the question: in which way must political institutions face those issues posed by the presence of different cultures within one and same nation?

Central in the debate about multiculturalism is the fact that as a consequence of the construction process of the nation-state, societies are structured according to the social norms which reflect the preferences and traditions of the "majority". Also, what is defined being "normal" is based upon the perception of the normality of the majority. This is where minorities could face difficulties, namely living their lives trying to adapt to the majority: an example would be the requirement to wear the helmet when riding a scooter. In Italy this is a generally well accepted requirement but someone who belongs to the Sikh minority (who for religious beliefs has to wear a turban) could consider this requirement as not fitting his culture or his religious conscience.

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[2] Melidoro D. (2015), *Multiculturalismo, una piccola introduzione*. Luiss University Press.
[3] Parekh B. (2006), *Rethinking Multiculturalism*. Palgrave Macmillan.

So, the next question would be: in which way do we have to face conflicts between law requirements and faith requirements? Is it acceptable to exempt minority members from the observation of a law which is in opposition with their religious precepts? How to solve the inequality within the conditions of the majorities and the minorities? Should we recognize rights to cultural minorities or assume a laissez fare attitude towards them? Moreover, how far should be autonomy conceded to minorities? These are the questions that multiculturalism faces.

1.2 The relationship between Liberalism and Multiculturalism

Liberals favour a system in which state treats its citizens equally and creates such an environment that each member of the society gets a fair share from the resources and available opportunities. Although, this might seem as a clear principle at first sight, two conclusions can be driven from this principle. First, the state should not intervene with the distribution of resources or try to balance the gap its citizens and second, liberal attitude requires that each religious and cultural community should have equal chance to survive and continue to practise their customs in the society. In contemporary modern democratic states such as UK, France, USA and Canada we see that states spare necessary social, political and financial resources for the survival and continuity of different religious communities and minority cultures. The reason for that is because culture is considered as an important aspect in shaping one's own identity and his/ her own interpretation of good life. The second point of view acknowledges that the state should be neutral and acts within the frame of laissez faire liberalism. Otherwise, the state can create inequalities among its citizens by implementing redistributive policies or entitling minority groups with special rights. Thus, the state should take the minimum part in the affairs of different cultural and religious groups and by nothing or minimum it allows citizens to be treated equally.

In light of what I argued above, why should we link together multiculturalism and liberalism? The answer is simple. Historically, liberalism has been a political theory which poses diversity as its main theoretical core. Indeed, originally, after the religious wars which overwhelmed Europe between the 16th and 17th centuries, the main scope of liberalism was to seek for the conditions which made possible the pacific coexistence between people with different beliefs. So, according to this vision, the roots of liberalism have to be found in the questions liberals asked themselves about religious diversity. Religious, philosophical and moral diversity is essential as well for the philosophical thought of John Rawls, the most influential political philosopher of the last century. An ulterior proof of the centrality of the role of diversity within the liberal theory, is offered by Catherine Audard (2009). In fact, she affirmed that the entire liberal history, can be

interpreted as an attempt to answer to the question "how is possible to live together?" given the fact that people are different in terms of beliefs, values, interests and so forward.[4]

However, which would be then the differences between liberalism and multiculturalism? They can be found in the way in which the two different theories consider diversity. The main difference is that multiculturalism focuses on the diversity between existing cultural groups within the same political community while liberalism assumes that different moral and philosophical beliefs already existing in a liberal democracy are aspect of the same culture. Let me clarify this concept with the words of Parekh (2006) : "Cultural groups as the indigenous, national minorities and immigrants now or later will put forward some forms of cultural autonomy, those requests imply a challenge of the traditional liberal idea of 'a homogenous juridical and political structure' of society". [5]

For instance, if we think about the Italian post-war situation during which Catholics and communists gathered together in order to write the Constitution despite their radically different political values and moral beliefs, we are dealing with a situation in which political, philosophical and moral diversities are internal to the exact same culture, namely the Italian one during the middle 20th century. In fact, even though the ideological differences between the two groups, neither of the two aspired to obtain some form of cultural or juridical autonomy, which instead is the main purpose of culture minorities. Concerning this, Muslim minorities who emigrated in a European country requesting the institution of Islamic tribunals in order to make the Sharia law applied (to solve controversies concerning divorce, inheritance and so on), are an example of two different groups with contrasting beliefs living in the same society. This is a scenario in which a minority claims autonomy in respect to already existing practices and laws, this is the kind of scenario which multiculturalism analyses, the one in which the diversity that creates debate is not the product of a sole culture.

The relationship between liberalism and multiculturalism is a difficult one, which went across different stages. We can briefly state that those liberals who lived during the 19th century and the first half of the 20th, recognized the value of cultures within the framework of liberal principles, especially autonomy and equality.[6] Nonetheless, this sensibility towards culture wasn't often accompanied by a soft approach towards national minorities.

A different phase in the relation between the two started at the end of WWII. From that moment onwards, liberalism seemed to be completely detached from cultural questions. The reason was the central attention human rights received during that period. As a consequence, the attentions towards cultural aspects and cultural belonging of the individual shifted to the background.

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[4] Audard C. (2009), *Qu'est-ce Que le Libèralisme*, Galliamard.
[5] Parekh B. (2006), *Rethinkng Multiculturalism*, Palgrave Macmillan.
[6] Kymlicka W. (1989*), Liberalism, Community and Culture*, Clarendon Press & Kymlicka, W. (1999), *La cittadinanza Multiculturale*, Il Mulino (ed. or. 1995)

Despite the scarce interest of the post-war liberalism towards multicultural questions, the discussion about cultural diversity began in Liberal contexts, especially in countries such as Australia and Canada, namely in pluralist social environments.

In general, we can assess three different versions of multiculturalism in light of liberalism. The first one considers the two as completely compatible between each other, the second one believes that multiculturalism requires to go further the traditional liberal principles, while the last one denies any legitimate recognition of cultural diversity within a liberal state.[7]

From the 80s a new liberal approach started to develop, the so called liberal culturalism. The perpetrators of this theory, share the belief that liberal principles are fully in line with multiculturalism. Plus, they believe that the recognition of some rights for minorities derives from the value of the culture and from the belonging to a cultural group for the individuals.

Liberalism has always neglect culture and the value of belonging to a group, being extremely focused on individualism. Indeed, Liberalism has traditionally believed that the state should limit its concessions to individual rights. As a matter of fact, for some of these liberals every type of discourse about minorities groups seems to be in contrast with the recognition of individual rights.

It seems like the interest towards cultural groups represents a distraction in respect to the primate of the individual, which according to liberals, represents the ultimate element for any political and moral consideration.

However, according to the supporters of the Liberal culturalism there are some valid reasons why liberals should pay attention to culture and groups. These reasons concern the fact that culture is the context within which the individual discovers the option which enables him/her to choose in order to give a significant meaning to his/her life and to realise him/her-self as an autonomous being.

Autonomy doesn't take place in the void, on the contrary it is exercised in a context which provides each individual with significant options between which he/she can choose. So, it can be said that a first reason why Liberalism should be interested in culture, concerns the bond between culture itself and autonomy. Indeed, autonomy is a fundamental value which characterises Liberalism, as a consequence, taking care of the context which represents the fertile ground for autonomy, cannot be extraneous to the liberal tradition. Moreover, is important to highlight how the belonging to a cultural group significantly influences the life chances of an individual. According to Joseph Raz (1994) this verifies in three possible ways. Firstly, when a culture goes through a phase of decadence, the individual will see his/her living conditions as worsening given the fact that he/she will remain with fewer choices. Secondly, when a culture passes through a positive phase the individual will benefit from a vast number of choices. Thirdly, sharing a culture will facilitate social relations, meaning that people belonging to the same culture share similar

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[7] Melidoro, D. (2015), *Multiculturalismo, una piccola introduzione*. Luiss University Press.

meanings in life which make it possible to develop important affective relationship.[8] Cultural belonging partly tells us who we are and confronts individuals who identify with the same culture. Even in this case, given the fact that belonging to a cultural group is connected to the interest for the individual's living conditions, we can state that Liberalism doesn't exceed the boundaries within which its fundamental principles rests. The considerations developed so far are enough to give a first view about what Liberal culturalism is. According to this stream of thought some usual questions which concern multiculturalism are analysed in light of individual autonomy and of the individual's life choices. Indeed, these are themes which are supported by liberalism itself. We are dealing with an instrumental conception of culture and group belonging, meaning that they are positively valued in the measure in which they promote other goods as individual autonomy.

1.3 Liberalism and the concept of citizenship

The spread of terms such as 'multiculturalism', 'politics of difference', 'politics of identity' and 'politics of recognition' both in political philosophy and in the public debate, indicates the crisis of the citizenship model based on the possession of common and universal rights. The liberal tradition, understands citizenship primarily as a legal status: political liberty is important as a means to protecting individual freedoms from interference by other individuals or the authorities themselves. But citizens exercise these freedoms primarily in the world of private associations and attachments, rather than in the political domain. The liberal model's origins are traceable to the Roman Empire and early-modern reflections on Roman law.

 The Empire's expansion resulted in citizenship rights being extended to conquered peoples, profoundly transforming the concept's meaning. Citizenship meant being protected by the law rather than participating in its formulation or execution. It became an "important but occasional identity, a legal status rather than a fact of everyday life".[9]

This model, which has always been the dominant one in Western liberal-democratic countries since WWII aftermath and as already said it attributed the recognition of the status of citizen to every individual of a Sate through the progressive possession of civic, political and social rights .[10] However, this possession didn't prevent some groups (as blacks, gays, lesbians, women, religious minorities, immigrants and indigenous people) from feeling marginalised, oppressed and excluded, more or less as they were considered as secondary citizens in respect to the majority. As Kymlicka (2002) points out, the more the time passes, the more excluded these groups feel even though they benefit from the same civic rights of the majority.

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[8] Raz J. (1994), '*Multiculturalism. A Liberal Perspective'*, in Idem (2004), Ethics in the Public Domain, Oxford University Press, pp. 170-191.

[9] Walzer M. (1989), "Citizenship", in *Political Innovation and Conceptual Change*, T. Ball, J. Farr, R. L. Hanson, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 211–220.

[10] Marshall T.H. (1965), *Class, Citizenship, and Social Development*, Anchor.

Members of these groups feel marginalised not only because of their lower economic status, but also because of their socio-cultural identity, namely their difference.[11] From these premises derives the need to go beyond the traditional conception of citizenship in order to develop a notion of citizenship more sensitive toward cultural diversity, so that profound diversities and cultural pluralism which dominates modern western societies can be accepted, recognized and welcomed.

Liberalism, being an individualistic political theory, has always been unable to defend minority rights. Indeed, until the end of the 1980s issues about minority rights have been perceived as a general reaction to the individualistic abstractness of the contemporary liberalism. The emphasis which liberalism puts on individual autonomy and on moral individualism, has been used by communitarians theorists as the proof of the fact that liberalism is inadequate to account for the social nature of the individual and as a consequence, of minority rights. The work of Kymlicka is an attempt to demonstrate that liberalism is able to elaborate an effective theory of minority rights and that are the real premises of the liberal theory which require this elaboration. The Canadian philosopher tries to justify minority rights as they were some tools to protect the cultural community whose survival is considered essential for the freedom and equality of the people it is composed by. [12]

1.4 Kymlicka and the Multiculturalist Debate

Kymlicka locates his whole ideas on liberal theory and he is an important successor of liberal tradition. Thus, he places individual autonomy prior to the community and communal values. As a political philosophy, liberalism has often been seen as "primarily concerned with the relationship between the individual and the state, and with limiting state intrusions on the liberties of citizens"[13] . For some scholars, this component of liberalism is seen as a strong one about multiculturalist affairs. In my opinion, this can be easily seen as one of the weaknesses of liberalism when it comes to the deal with the problems regarding minorities and minority rights if we are stuck with the idea that liberal ideology is the only roof under which both majority and minority values can be represented, and peoples can live happily together. Kymlicka (1989) conceives Liberalism as a normative political theory, meaning as "a collection of moral arguments on the justification of the institutions and the political act. As intended, Liberalism has specific political moral prepositions which Kymlicka shows through three different propositions. The first one concerns our interests: "our essential interest consists in leading a good life, having those things that are part of a good life". This doesn't mean that each life has a value, Kymlicka rather intends that living a good life is not the same of leading a life which we simply consider as good. Human beings are fallible, and they can develop

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[11] Kymlicka W. (2002), *Contemporary Political Philosophy. An introduction*, Oxford University Press.

[12] Murhy M. (2012), *Multiculturalism. A Critical Introduction*, Routledge.

[13] Kymlicka W. (1989), *Liberalism, Community and Culture*, Clarendon Press.

wrong beliefs about the value of what they are pursuing. The deliberation process to identify which life is good and which ends shall be pursued takes place in a context characterized by relations of interdependence. This context is represented by culture. The second preposition which according to Kymlicka (1989) represents the pre-condition of the realisation of the good life is that "we have to lead our life as internal, in accordance to our beliefs of what gives value to life itself", while the third one is that "we should feel free to shadow these beliefs and to examine every argument our culture provides us with". This means that if something has to be valuable to someone, it has to be subscribed by the individual. For instance, a religious belief doe not confer any value to life if it imposed with violence rather than as the product of a free deliberation. Moreover, as a consequence of humanity's fallibility, each individual is entitled to live in a context which enables him to know different conceptions of the good and so to dispose of those information that are necessary to examine his own life plan and revise it whether there is need or not.

Liberalism as conceived by Kymlicka (1989) recognizes a fundamental value to culture and cultural belonging. Indeed, even if it claims that in a Liberal society the decision on how to live is up to the individual[14], the author argues that every decision implies a selection within the options supplied by the social environment. For Kymlicka (1999), this environment is culture, which ultimately gives meaning to life.[15] So, the value which Liberalism attributes to culture, is not a self-reliant value, by one which derives from being the space within which individual choices are made and acquire significance.

Here culture is essential to individuals also in a second meaning: it confers them identity. In fact, people belonging to the same culture tend to identify with it until the point in which self-respect is influenced relating to how others perceived that culture. In few words: when a culture is not respected, there will be negative consequences for the dignity and self-esteem of the members of the same culture. According to Kymlicka (1999) the value of cultural belonging doesn't regard only traditional societies, but also liberal ones, in which freedom and individual rights are protected and in which there is no shared conception of the good. The approach to a shared good is the communitarian one.

When Kymlicka talks about culture, he refers to societal culture. With this expression he wants to underline that also a bundle of institutions which share social practices, characterize these societal cultures, and not just values and common traditions. More precisely, a societal culture "is a culture territorially concentrated, based on a shared language used in many social institutions, either in public or private life".[16]

Those who belong to the same societal culture will share institutions and a language but not necessarily the same religious beliefs, traditions and styles of personal conducts. Indeed, a societal culture can be and is pluralist. The creation of a societal culture is strictly connected to the modernization process. In fact, Kymlicka claims that "modernisation consists in the diffusion of a common culture which expresses

[14] Herr R.S. (2007), *Liberal Multiculturalism: an Oxymoron*?, in Philosophical Gorum, 38 (1), pp. 23-41.

[15] *Kymlicka W. (1999), La Cittadinanza Multiculturale, Il Mulino (ed. or. 1995).*

[16] Kymlicka W. (2001), *Politics in the Vernacular*, Oxford University Press.

itself in shared economic, political and training institutions". [17] The existence of societal cultures as conceived by Kymclicka, is functional to the modern economy's need to gather a working force suitable to its developing standards which made possible the diffusion of a high level of solidarity, needed to sustain the welfare state's mechanism. Also, societal cultures made possible the realization of a public educational system which in turn has constituted one of the pillars of the democratic system.

Kymlicka (1999) distinguishes between two different types of cultural diversity, to which corresponds two types of States. In the first case, cultural diversity "derives from the absorption in a wider cultural state territorially concentrated and which in precedence ruled themselves". [18] Those cultures who become incorporated in the wider one, are defined 'national minorities', and the State within which they exist as 'multinational'.

Indeed, in a multinational state two or more distinct societal cultures are present and minority cultures don't aspire to assimilation, rather they aspire to forms of autonomy or self-government which enables them to preserve their own specific culture. Examples of Multinational States are the USA and Canada.

Un the USA national minorities are Portoricans, Indian tribes, Hawaian aborigines and all those groups who were involuntarily annexed to the USA following a colonization process or a reconquest.

Canadian national minorities are represented instead by the inhabitants of the Quebec and the indigenous.

For Kymlicka, immigration is the second source of cultural diversity and is seen as a voluntary phenomenon through which migrants are willing to integrate in the host society; immigrants "want the majority institutions of their society to be reformed in order to accommodate their cultural differences and to recognize the value of their cultural heritage". [19] Immigrants seek inclusion in institutional and political life and subscribe to basic values without representing threats to stability and social peace. Moreover, Kymlicka (2001) observes that since the 60s of the last century, in the USA, Canada and Australia (in the countries with major immigration) there has been the transition from a model of assimilation called Anglo-conformity, to a more tolerant model which conceives integration as an inclusion which consequently allows the preservation of one's own cultural specificity. [20]

Despite this, Kymlicka (2001) himself considers integration as a two-way process, since the presence of immigrants necessarily modifies the society that welcomes them.

Spinner (1994, chapter IV) defines the policy of a liberal state towards immigrants as a policy of pluralistic integration. In fact, the inclusion of ethnic minorities pluralizes the majority's social culture as it

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[17] Kymlicka W. (1999), *La cittadinanza Multiculturale*, Il Mulino (ed. or. 1995).
[18] Kymlicka W. (1999), *La cittadinanza Multiculturale*, Il Mulino (ed. or. 1995).

[19] Kymlicka W. (1996), *"Social Unity in a Lberal State",* in Social Ohilosophy and Policy, 13 (1), pp. 105-36
[20] Kymlicka W. (2001), *"Territorial Boundaries: a Liberal Egalitarian Perspective'*, in Miller D. and Hashmi S.H. cured by *Boundaries and Justice. Diverse Ethical Perspectives*, Princeton University Press, pp. 249-275

introduces different groups that bring with them specific cultural identities and at the same time, even the habits and practices of immigrants change in a liberal sense when they come into contact with those of the societies in which they have moved to. [21]

However, it is possible to move some critics to the model proposed by Kymlicka.

Firstly, it is not always said that immigrants seek to integrate perfectly into the societies in which they move.[22] Moreover, even the idea that migratory phenomena are always voluntary can be questioned [23], just think of those who request political asylum from countries in critical condition. Instead, according to Melidoro (2015), the limitations of Kymlicka's approach to tackling ethnic minorities arise in the fact that the cultural diversity represented by immigrants is largely underestimated compared to the diversity of national minorities.[24]

Kymlicka wrote that "the claims of national groups and indigenous peoples generally involve a more substantial introduction of ethnocultural diversity in the public sphere and a more substantial level of differentiated citizenship than what is required by immigrant groups".[25] In reality, considering the fact that both national minorities and indigenous peoples are concentrated in a territory different from that of the majority, and given the cultural independence that Kymlicka himself attributes to them, it is difficult to understand how the diversity they represent is held within the public sphere of a liberal democracy, if not in an indirect way. On the contrary, immigrants, not being territorially concentrated in a single area, do not adopt an attitude that we could define as isolationist. For this reason, the diversity that immigrants introduce into the societies in which they move is more perceptible precisely because their practices and values coexist (both peacefully and in conflict) with those of the majority group.

Immigrant groups are defined as 'ethnic groups', a State which contains multiple immigrants community is called 'polyethnic'. According to Kymlicka, immigrants do not possess a distinct societal culture from the one of the majority's.

In fact, having voluntarily moved to another State, immigrants are disposed to integrate in the new societal culture without pretending to constitute their culture in the host country.

Examples of the fact that a state can be both multinational and polyethnic are the USA and Canada, in which both national minorities and immigrant communities do exist.

Accordingly, Kymlicka considers the diffusion of multiculturalism at an international level due to three main principles. First, the idea of the state as an exclusive dominion of the hegemonic cultural group has been abandoned, leaving space for the principle that "the state has to be considered as belonging to all citizens in equal measure" (Kymlicka 2007). Then, there has been a shift from the conception of minorities

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[21] Spinner-Halev J. (1994), *The Boundaries of Citizenship*, John Hopkins University Press.

[22] Stjernfelt F. (2012), *Liberal Multiculturalism as Political Philosophy*; Will Kymlicka, in the Monist, 95 (1), pp. 45-71

[23] Kukathas C. (1997), *Multiculturalism as Fairness: Will Kymlicka's Multicultural Citizenship*, in the Journal of Political Philosophy, 5(4), pp. 406-27

[24] Melidoro, D. (2015), *Multiculturalismo, una breve introduzione*. Luiss University Press.

[25] Kymlicka W. (2007), *Multicultural Odysseys*, Oxford University Press.

within the public sphere, meaning that nowadays minorities' ethnic identity is no more mandatorily absorbed or excluded, but rather accepted and integrated. Finally, the recognition of the wrongs committed towards the minorities on behalf of the majority has been obtain and as a consequence the legitimacy of compensative policies accepted.

The implementation of the above cited principles brought to the concession of some rights to minorities which are distinguished by Kymlicka between self-government rights, polyethnic rights and special representation rights.[26] Self-government rights concern political autonomy or territorial jurisdiction granted to national minorities, polyethnic rights instead, are those rights which grants immigrants and religious minorities the expression of their personal cultural interests, while special representation rights provide for possible representational deficit from the institution towards the interests of the minorities.

Considering the fact that these rights are attributed to the individual, being part of a cultural group, they are referred to as "forms of differentiated citizenship according to the belonging of a group" or merely "collective rights".[27] What is important to highlight is the fact that minority rights do not let multiculturalism give priority the 'collectivity' in respect to the individual because minority groups' needs are poorly in relation with the struggle between collectivist and individualist about the priority of the individuals or the groups. Rather, these rights "are based on the idea that justice between groups requires the conferral of differentiated rights to members of different groups" (Kymlicka 1999, p.87).

What Kymlicka understands from citizenship based on group differentiated rights is that ensuring the justice between members of different groups. Thus, the idea being establishing group rights are not only about the idea of that communal rights are prior to individual ones but also about the need for establishing different rights for different groups according to their needs and vulnerabilities in the society.

1.5 Minority rights in a Liberal framework

What is then the relation between minority rights and Liberalism? If we consider that individual freedom is central to the Liberal theory in its entirety, it comes that minority rights can be accepted from a liberal viewpoint only when they do not contradict the respect "of the freedom and autonomy of the individuals"[28] Therefore, if we want to demonstrate that these rights are compatible with liberal principles, we will have to demonstrate that they are part of the individuals' legitimacy to defend their own culture. In this sense, defending a culture, as Kymlicka intends it, means to defend its structure. Here culture represents the context within which individual autonomy acquires significance and is exercised.

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[26] Kymlicka W., (1995), *Multicultural Citizenship*, Oxford University Press.
[27] *Kymlicka W. (1999), La Cittadinanza Multiculturale, Il Mulino (ed. or. 1995).*
[28] *Kymlicka W. (1999), La Cittadinanza Multiculturale, Il Mulino (ed. or. 1995).*

From a liberal perspective, individuals become autonomous within their own culture. So, it follows that if minority rights are conceived as measures which assure that everyone has the necessary conditions to prosper their life autonomously, there is no reason for liberals to deny the recognition of these policies in favour of cultural minorities.

Of course, there are some objectors to the conferral of minority rights. Indeed, some argue that conceding rights to illiberal minorities would bring to some danger (for instance if we consider a traditionalist group who required and obtains rights to strengthen some forms of control on women's lives on behalf of men). Kymlicka responds to these critics by distinguishing between two different types of cultural minority's demands: internal restrictions and external protections. The former are those measures which a group advocates to reduce the impact of internal dissent through the restriction of individual fundamental liberties, while the latter consists in protections which ethnic or national groups could require in order to protect their existence from the decisions of the dominant society. While internal restrictions are incompatible with the liberal theory, external protections are and as a consequence they represent the ideal embodiment of minority rights. The argument in favour of the external protections is related to the egalitarian feature of the liberal theory. Indeed, on the heels of John Rawl's and Ronald Dworkin's theories of distributive justice, Kymlicka (1989) argues that members of cultural minorities may suffer from inequalities based on their living circumstances or allocations, but not from their choices and ambitions. [29]

In fact, belonging to a disfavoured culture it is not a question involving the choice of the individual but rather a question of misfortune. As Kymlicka (1999) highlights, the recognition of a right can "compensate this misfortune, since it reduces minority culture's vulnerability in respect to the majority's decisions" and it assures that" members of the minority have the same opportunities as the majority to work and live in their own culture". [30]

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[29] Kymlicka W. (1989), *Liberalism, Community and Culture*, Clarendon Press.
[30] *Kymlicka W. (1999), La Cittadinanza Multiculturale, Il Mulino (ed. or. 1995).*

<center>**CHAPTER TWO**</center>

<center>**POST-LIBERAL MULTICULTURAL THEORIES**</center>

2.1 Multiculturalism of recognition and inclusion

Some formulations of multiculturalism are characterized by a critical attitude to Liberalism. These multicultural theories are also defined as post-Liberal [31] because they believe that an adequate response to cultural diversity requires the overcoming of Liberalism and its fundamental principles. As specified by Melidoro, "discontinuity is shown above all in the recognition of cultural diversity and in the importance attributed to the inclusion of cultural minorities".[32] In fact, for the post-Liberal theories, cultural diversity is not merely a fact, but an aspect of the contemporary world and, with the words of Smith (2010) "a value that must be approved and promoted".[33] Moreover, the concept of inclusion of cultural minorities is another element that unites these theoreticians; it is not by chance that this type of multiculturalism is called "multiculturalism of inclusion". What does the multiculturalism of inclusion therefore aspire to? First of all, it aspires to accept minorities within liberal democratic societies by encouraging respect for cultural pluralism and the participation of minorities in the public life of society. Indeed, rather than considering diversity as a given fact of social reality, the multiculturalism of inclusion aspires to positively evaluate diversity and to show the narrowness of classical liberal theories.

The starting point for supporters of this form of multiculturalism is that the liberal democratic societies have in themselves the tendency to exclude minorities. As a matter of fact, it is rather strange that a liberal democracy, as a form of government that guarantees political power to the people, feeds the risk of social exclusion, yet this is what the advocators of the multiculturalism of inclusion support.

Regarding this, according to Melidoro, we need to start from the consideration that "a condition for a liberal democratic regime to prosper is that citizens share a strong political identity. For a society to function well, citizens need to nurture a great mutual trust and feel part of a stable and cohesive society. This situation changes when new and different groups, such as immigrants, enter the scene ".[34] It follows that after

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[31] Mancina C. (2013), '*Multiculturalismo'*, in Botti C. (cured by), *Le etiche della diversità culturale*, Le Lettere pp. 83-102

[32] Melidoro D. (2015), *Multiculturalismo, una breve introduzione*. Luiss University Press.

[33] Smith N. (2010), '*Multiculturalism and Recognition'*. In Ivison D. (cured by), *The Ashgate Research Companion to Multiculturalism,* Ashgate pp. 159-177.

[34] Melidoro D. (2015), *Multiculturalismo, una breve introduzione*. Luiss University Press

the appearance of groups carrying a different identity, the one shared by the majority is put under pressure so that the majority itself will be led to redefine its political identity and the cultural and emotional ties that hold it together. In the course of history liberal democracies have denied this problem, often denying citizenship. These exclusions threaten the egalitarian moral consideration of the individuals, which is considered a principle characterizing the modern age. Moreover, the exclusion represents a contradiction with the logic of popular sovereignty understood as the government of all the people.[35] In short, multiculturalism of inclusion aims at the public recognition of cultural diversity, that is, the acceptance of different behaviours, practices and identities as normal and legitimate options that the citizens of an open society can have at their disposal.[36] There are three possible versions of the multiculturalism of recognition and inclusion, which I will analyse in the following paragraphs.

2.2 Charles Taylor and the Politics of Recognition

Charles Taylor argues that recognition is an essential component of the concept of rights, and that individuals can be recognised as part of a group. [37] In his theory of multiculturalism of inclusion Taylor starts from the assumption that human identity depends in part on how other individuals recognize us.

In fact, according to Taylor (1998) for individuals, an adequate acknowledgment of one's identity is "a fundamental human need". On the basis of this, it will follow that both a lack of recognition and an inadequate recognition will have negative consequences for human well-being and consequently this will lead to real forms of oppression.

According to Taylor with the advent of modernity two changes took place that have transformed the way and the sense in which identity and recognition are treated in the public sphere.

The first change in question is represented by the collapse of social hierarchies, and with them the collapse of the concept of honour to which has been replaced the one of dignity that has a more egalitarian exception in comparison to the former. In his argument Taylor claims that the ancient hierarchies were based on the notion of "honour" which even though was a matter of choice, it defined the individuals of society; the term we use today is "dignity". Therefore, the transition from honour to dignity has brought out the universalistic politics of dignity according to which all individuals, as they possess equal dignity, enjoy equal rights.

The second change brought by modernity in the conception of identity and recognition is represented by the affirmation of identity as an individualized concept. This means that, according to Taylor (1998): "my identity depends crucially on my dialogic relations with others", that is to say that the process of discovery and formation of the identity of the individual takes place in a dialogic context. According to Taylor's

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[35] Taylor C. (1999), '*Democratic Exclusion (and Its Remedies?)*', in Bhargava R., Bagchi A.K. and Sudarshan R. (cured by), *Multiculturalism, Liberalism and Democracy*, Oxford University Press, pp. 138-163.
[36] Galeotti A.E. (2002), *Toleration as Recognition*, Cambridge University Press.
[37] Taylor C., Haberman J., (1998), *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition*, Princeton University Press.

theory, this dialogic process is rooted in a community context in which there is a necessary link between the individual and the community because the former will acquire his identity only and exclusively within a community context in which values and ways of interpreting the world are shared. [38] This new idea focused on the inner voice of the individual and on the concept of authenticity:" 'on the original view, the inner voice was important because it tells us what the right thing to do is; being in touch with our moral feelings matter here, as a means to the end of acting rightly"[39]. Also, Taylor argues that the identity is necessarily collective and that cultural rights cannot be enjoyed by individuals alone because they are collective by nature. In this, Taylor's position collides with the liberal tradition which is based on the idea of individual freedom and the neutrality.

The modern notion of identity has given rise to the politics of difference, which requires the recognition of the "unrepeatable identity, distinct from that of anyone else, of this individual or this group" (Taylor 1998). However, it is important to clarify that the politics of difference on a par with that of equal dignity has a universalist character as well. In fact, according to Charles Taylor, it is based on a universal potentiality, namely to be able to define one's identity not only as an individual but also as part of a culture (Taylor 1998), and according to the scholar, this potential must be recognized to everyone in the same way. Nonetheless, as underlined by Melidoro (2015), the politics of dignity and the politics of difference are distinguished by their object of consideration. [40] While the former addresses what human beings share despite their differences, the latter focuses on what distinguishes every human being, considered both as an individual and as a member of a cultural group. The substantial difference between the two policies lies in the fact that the politics of dignity considers individuals as having dignity as such, regardless of their group of belonging, while the politics of difference means identity as having a collective character.

It is quite straightforward to understand that the politics of dignity and the politics of difference often come into conflict, although they are both based on the idea of equal respect. For the politics of dignity, the equal respect is realized when people are treated abstractly from what differentiates them, instead the politics of the difference asks to value and cultivate what distinguishes individuals and cultural groups (Taylor 1998). Neutral liberalism, a theory elaborated by John Rawls, Bruce Ackerman and Ronald Dworkin expresses very well the abstract character of difference in the politics of dignity. For these scholars, in fact, a genuinely liberal society respects individual rights and aspires to maintain a neutral attitude towards the conceptions of the good that individuals choose. Neutrality also means that the State should not favour any idea of a good life, and that cultural, religious and moral affiliations should not have any weight in conferring liberal rights. A liberal society in this sense is held together by the respect for liberal procedures rather than by a specific vision of the good. However, Taylor argues that neutral liberalism should be

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[38] Mulhall S., Swift A. (1996), *Liberals and Communitarians*, Blackwell.

[39] Taylor C., Haberman J., (1998), *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition,* Princeton University Press

[40] Melidoro D. (2015), *Multiculturalismo, una breve introduzione*. Luiss University Press.

criticized as it turns out not to embrace differences. The author in fact considers this theory as directed to apply uniformly given rules to all cases and considers that, because of its strongly individualistic character, it excludes that society must and can have collective ends. For these reasons, according to Melidoro (2015), neutral liberalism and the politics of dignity cannot account for some significant cases. One example is that of Québec, in which the francophone population asks for substantial cultural autonomy to perpetuate French culture threatened by the English-speaking one. The government of Québec assumes that the francophone differences must be recognized and that their survival is a collective asset that must be pursued. In order to realize this good, however, it is necessary to implement measures that constitute transgressions to the requirements of liberal neutrality. Basically, by privileging the francophone culture, society is not neutral because there are those who pursue the culture of their francophone ancestors and those who, on the other hand, wish to adhere to the anglophone culture.

Taylor considers liberal neutrality as impossible and undesirable[41], since liberalism is a policy linked to certain historical and political contexts and prevents from fully understand that every society is based on an idea of a common good different from the one supposed by liberals. In fact, for Taylor, every community is marked by a shared idea of the common good, according to which individual preferences and values must be judged.[42] Therefore, the community is the context within which individuals are located and in which they form their identity. So, the community itself is a good to be preserved. For Taylor every culture must be protected and preserved, even more so when it comes to minority cultures whose survival is threatened by the power of the majority.

2.3 Recognition vs. Tolerance

In most of the relevant literature, the distinction between tolerance, acceptance and recognition is not really clarified. For the liberal tradition, the emphasis has always been on equality, equal rights, equal opportunities, equal treatment and so on without considering what people want in terms of their differences. It is observed that these 'different' people are not only in the need to be differentiated but also recognized as who they are. The special rights that they are entitled to by the liberal democratic state do not always give them the chance of being recognized or accepted in the eyes of the members of the society or even before law. This is why the ideas of Taylor are really important in the multiculturalism debate.[43]

The important shift from honour to dignity which took place in the history of politics has also come with the emphasis on the equalization of rights and identities. The age of the 'more privileged' citizens has come to an end, at least in the eyes of the state and before law although it would be too optimistic to claim

[41] Taylor C., Haberman J., (1998), *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition,* Princeton University Press
[42] Kymlicka W., *Contemporary Political Philosophy. An Introduction*, Oxford University Press.
[43] Taylor C., Haberman J., (1998), *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition,* Princeton University Press

that all inequalities have been disappeared in this way. As Taylor argues, for many people this equalization only brought an equality for civil rights and voting rights. There are also others who claim that it also has affected the socioeconomic aspects of life in general. However, it requires more than changing votes to shape public opinion and regulate everyday life which contains many social and economic inequalities like equal pay or integrated settlement policies. Although there are still many problems to overcome, equal citizenship has been accepted as a universal value. Thus, in the new age of politics of difference, liberals should be ready to reconsider the classical understanding of the principles of liberal democratic state in order to present rights and immunities to recognize and accept differences and not to try to create a melting pot. Some still might argue that individual rights come before communal or group rights but the implications of this idea it is mostly seen in Anglo- American world. (Taylor, 1998). I think this is one of the major reasons for why in the Anglo- American world, there is always an on-going effort for creating a common identity, one nation, one language for all on the one hand, and promoting the 'self' and the individualism on the other. In my opinion, from the perspective of Taylor, they can easily be accused of implementing assimilation strategies in the name of creating a melt pot. This would be a dangerous trap that the liberal state should carefully avoid. The equal use of resources, equal rights and treatment and state's 'hands off' laissez faire policies may lead to the danger of extinction for some cultures and identities.

As Kymlicka and Taylor also mentions, the state still has the power of making decisions about the official language, some religious ceremonies, official languages that are used in education, public radio and television broadcasting. Thus, the state still remains as a powerful figure to decide which cultures and religions continue to exist in the society. Therefore, the liberal state should be ready to intervene when and where there is a necessity. If a minority group is able to practice their customs at a sufficient level, then there would be no part to take for government. Otherwise, government should intervene and try to create a balanced situation in order to make sure that the minority people in question are able to practice their culture and religion. Thus, while polyethnic groups are being protected by some special rights within the boundaries of existing laws and regulations, this should not allow these groups to have internal restrictions. The intention behind establishing polyethnic rights is to protect these groups from external suppressions and the danger of extinction or assimilation. Thus, it would not be so rightful to allow polyethnic groups to have the right to make regulations and restriction on its members' individual rights and freedoms.

2.4 Bhikhu Parekh's systematic Multicultural theory

Bhikhu Parekh provides us with another version of the multiculturalism of inclusion in which he criticizes the universalistic character of contemporary liberalism and in which he introduces the use of intercultural dialogue as a fundamental tool for the resolution of conflicts which are typical of multiculturalism. According to Parekh, the problem consists in the fact that liberalism is "a historically specific way of thinking and living (...), linked to a particular culture, economy and politics, and does not travel alone or long resist in their absence". [44] In fact, liberalism places a great emphasis on individualism, on the ideal of personal autonomy, on rationality, on the choice of the moral subject independent of the social context in which it operates. Moreover, liberalism believes that relations between the state and the citizen are not mediated by intermediate institutions such as the family or various associations. Parekh claims that although liberalism aspires to be a universalist theory, it expresses historically determined values, whose acceptance in contexts different from the one in which they originated is deeply problematic. For example, consider how an Islamic citizen may find himself in difficulty in conceiving his relationship with the state in individualistic terms.[45] Given the particularistic and historically situated character of liberalism, addressing the questions posed by cultural diversity from a liberal point of view appears quite problematic. In Parekh's view, the underlying error of contemporary liberalism is to place itself at the centre of the theoretical analysis, making it the only point of reference even when dealing with different cultural traditions.[46]

In other words, liberals appreciate the culture for what makes it possible to do, that is to represent the structural context of individual lives, but they are not able to go further, or to show why cultural diversity is something to be taken care of for its intrinsic value.

Parekh's aim is to use intercultural dialogue as a mean of questioning the values of Western liberal democracies and to address the demands for exemption that certain cultural minorities advance, being opposed by the universally valid laws of liberalism.

According to Parekh's systematic theory, there are four reasons that support the intrinsic value of cultural diversity. In the first place, no culture "contains all that has value in human life and develops the full range of human possibilities" (Parekh 2006), this means that cultures complement and correct each other, expanding in this way the horizons of the human mind.

Secondly, cultural diversity is a "constitutive element and a condition of human freedom" (Parekh 2006).

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[44] Parekh B., (2011), *Talking Politics*, Oxford University Press.

[45] Melidoro D. (2015), *Multiculturalismo, una breve introduzione*. Luiss University Press

[46] Parekh B. (2006), *Rethinking Multiculturalism*, Palgrave Macmillan.

In fact, if there were no other cultures, human beings would find themselves imprisoned in their culture of origin and would consequently tend to absolutize it. On the contrary, the presence of other cultures means that there are different points from which is to possible observe one's own culture from the outside, in order to evaluate its weaknesses and strengths.

Thirdly, cultural diversity makes us understand the complexity of our own culture. In fact, coming into contact with different cultures, everyone has the opportunity to realize how much their culture is actually the result of different influences.

Finally, cultural diversity creates a network in which cultures meet and come into contact, exchange ideas and enrich each other, experimenting and creating new ideas that otherwise would not have been generated.

What Parekh wants to emphasize is the concept that cultures should not be understood as monolithic blocks but rather as continuous and evolving flows; they do not live in isolation but instead have constant connections and interactions primarily through dialogue.

It is precisely the notion of intercultural dialogue that is central to Parekh's work on multiculturalism. In fact, in the work of the Indian scholar, intercultural dialogue plays a primary role in showing the limits of liberalism. Parekh considers the so-called *operational values* (Parekh 2006) as the starting point of intercultural dialogue, namely those values that regulate the life of the members of a society; they are incorporated into the constitution and regulate ordinary legislation and relations between individual citizens. In the words of Parekh, they constitute "the shared moral structure of the public life of a society" (Parekh 2006). Moreover, intercultural dialogue is considered as bifocal (Parekh 2006), in the sense that it requires a critical reflection both on the practices for which a minority requires an exemption, and on the fundamental values that regulate the life of the major public, namely the operating values mentioned above. In this way, both the majority and the minority are called to question not only their own behaviour, but also their beliefs and values. Dialogue has a transformative effect on all the parties involved, precisely because both groups enter into a dialogic process that can lead them to revisit some aspects of their conscience that they first considered as dogmatic.

Intercultural dialogue is articulated in three different phases which, as Parekh specifics, do not necessarily take place in sequence. The first phase is characterized by the defence by a minority of a practice that the majority considers offensive towards its public operational values. Here, the minority will have to demonstrate to the majority that the practice in question is an integral part of its culture and for this reason it creates obligations. Nevertheless, the fact that a practice falls within a culture does not automatically make it morally acceptable. For this reason, the majority is usually not persuaded by the argumentative strategy that characterizes the first phase, so the second phase of the dialogue is necessary. Here, the minority can argue that the practice in question must be allowed because it is inextricably linked to other elements of its culture, so that if it were forbidden it would manifest a real upheaval of the minority culture.

Finally, in the last phase of intercultural dialogue, the minority will have to assess that the practice that the majority would like to forbid is acceptable according to the values of the majority itself. At this point, the majority can accept or not the practice of the minority.

A concrete example of how cultural dialogue works is the way in which Parekh discusses female genital mutilation (FGM), i.e. the practice of excision and infibulation of female genitalia.

This practice is widespread especially in Africa, the Middle East and South-East Asia and is one of the most debated issues in the field of multiculturalism because, although it is a prohibited practice in all Western countries, there are still Muslim immigrant communities that require this practice.

According to the model of intercultural dialogue elaborated by Parekh, it is possible to articulate this practice following the three phases described above.

In the first sentence, the defence of the FGM practice can refer to the fact that it is required by the religion or culture of the group to which the girls belong, and precisely for this reason it would be binding. In the second phase it could be argued that the FGM is connected to practices and beliefs that are fundamental for the integrity of the community to which the girls belong (for example, that practice could guarantee the moderation of the sexual life of young women and consequently their social acceptance in the community of belonging). Finally, in the third phase we could refer to the values that the FGM promotes, such as curbing the obsession with the sexual sphere that can lead to psychological problems especially amongst the younger generations.

Parekh claims that none of these defences succeed in the goal of making female genital mutilation acceptable. He observes that the mere fact that a practice is imposed by a religion or a culture is just a reason to respect it, but it is not a conclusive reason. In fact, there is no trace of this practice in the Qur'an. In addition, many Muslim countries do not practice FGM and in general there is an important

disagreement about where this practice takes place. Moreover, the alleged benefits that would derive from this practice are not sufficient to overshadow all the damages that would result from its exercise. For example, it is not certain that FGM guarantees virginity or sexual modesty, or even women's social acceptance.

2.5 Tariq Modood's sociological approach to Multiculturalism

This post-liberal theory was developed by the sociologist Tariq Modood in the volume "*A Civic Idea*", first published in 2007 and then again in 2013. [47]

In Modood's approach, prevails the attention on the sociological aspects of multiculturalism.

Indeed, the scholar defines multiculturalism as "the political accommodation of minorities made up of immigrants who, starting from non-Western countries, move to the rich West" (Modood 2013). Unlike the multiculturalist theory proposed by Kymlicka, Modood deals with immigrants, and in particular the condition of Muslim immigrants in Western democracies in the socio-political climate post 9/11.

In fact, the multiculturalism of the Canadian scholar concerns both nationals and immigrants.

In Modood's analysis the starting point is the negative conception of difference, considered as discrimination, stigmatization, exclusion, racism, etc. In fact, in his multicultural theory, the author starts from the observation that minority groups of immigrants represent differences that the majority, constituted by the culture and by the identity of the majority itself, perceive as deviations from normality. In this scenario, it is precisely multiculturalism that produces their positive evaluation, that is, it makes them something to be appreciated, defended and promoted. Basically, multiculturalism constitutes a bulwark in their defence.

At the center of Modood's multicultural theory we find three key-words: equality, plurality and integration.[48]

As regards the concept of equality, it must be applied to both groups and individuals, contrary to the liberal theory and in its individualist conception of equality which fails to fully grasp the fact that individuals possess a certain group identity that inevitably produces some forms of inequality. An example is racism, which does not affect individuals as such, but individuals as belonging to a specific ethnic minority.

This type of multiculturalism is intended as a condition of equality in which the life chances of an individual must not be negatively influenced by the belonging of the individual in question to a certain economically or politically weak group, or by prejudice and discrimination.

Modood incorporates the considerations of Iris Young [49] in affirming that the resulting equality "from the impartial and consistent application of a single set of regulatory rules or conventions"[50] is not sufficient to avoid discrimination and inequality. As a matter of fact, the rules that regulate the distinction between public and private and the public space in general are formulated by the majority. It follows that what is considered as normal is what is established bearing in mind the values and traditions of the majority. Modood, argues that the way in which this happens can be a source of significant inequalities, despite the rules being applied

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[47] Modood T. (2013), *Multiculturalism*, Polity Press.
[48] Modood T. (2005), *a Defence of Multiculturalism*, in Soundings, pp. 62-71.
[49] Young I. M. (1996), *Le politiche della differenza*, Feltrinelli (ed. of.1990).
[50] Modood T. (2013), *Multiculturalism*, Polity Press.

without discrimination of any kind. The scholar takes as an example the social policies for housing in a Western country (Modood 2013), which are based on the concept of a small family, the mononuclear one, composed by parents and children. However, this kind of family conception is anything but universally accepted. In fact, it becomes problematic when we are dealing with a context of cultural pluralism. It follows that if such social housing policies (in this case) are based on the notion of a mononuclear family, immigrants residing in that country, despite formal equality, could be discriminated against it because they are incapable of deriving concrete benefit from certain policies since they have a more extensive conception of the family.

Therefore, the multicultural equality of Modood calls for going beyond the usual norms of non-discrimination and the universal application of the rules of coexistence. This multiculturalism asks to include minorities in the process of identifying what is considered normal in the public space, which is given for acquired and unchangeable while it should be somehow "pluralized" from the cultural point of view, in the sense that the idea of what is normal, acceptable and deserving of respect should be expanded. The result is that in a multicultural society, even minority identities can have a public dimension, without being forced to retreat into the private sphere as "guilty" of non-compliance with the majority.

The second key-word of Modood's multiculturalism is plurality. In fact, the groups that make up a multicultural society, have very different characteristics to which public policies must turn to in order to be sensitive to this plurality. As Modood (2013) argues, the groups have different "vulnerabilities, needs and priorities" so there is no provision that fits equally well to all groups because different disadvantages might stem from different natures. Therefore, to claim that there is only one adequate response to all disadvantaged situations tends not to respect the plurality of forms that discrimination takes.

Finally, the last key- word is integration. Modood (2013) states that multiculturalism is a specific way of understanding integration. According to him, integration is a bi-directional social process, in which both the majority and the minority are transformed by putting into practice traditions, values and social beliefs. In this sense it distinguishes itself from assimilation, which is instead a one-way process in which the minority has to transform itself accordingly to the majority.

Modood distinguishes two types of multicultural integration. The first concerns both individuals and groups, which being different from each other, will have each a specific way of integrating and consequently one integration policy will be different from the other. The second type of integration instead creates new forms of belonging that aim at redesigning the concept of citizenship. These are peculiar forms of citizenships, the so-called hyphenated identities, such as Italian Americans, American Jews or British Muslims. In this sense, an American Jew is an American citizen in all respects but in accordance with his ethnic origin. What Modood wants to make us understand in brief is that, in a fully multicultural society, everyone can be a citizen, but each of us is a citizen in his/her own way, that is, in a manner consistent with the cultural group of origin. It follows that identity is neither removed nor bounded in the private sphere, but it enters the public sphere and transforms it into an egalitarian sense.

CHAPTER THREE

INTERCULTURALISM AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO MULTICULTURALISM:
The Québec's case

3.1 The reasonable accommodation debate

In 2006, Québec has been gripped by an intense debate called 'reasonable accommodation debate', which was focused on the extent to which the practices of minority and immigrant groups should have been accommodated in the local society, with a particular focal point on religious practices which were perceived as being in conflict with the 'secular'/ Christian West.[51]

In Québec, the general context for the spread of this debate has been "inter-culturalism", the policy that characterised the province, in contrast with the multicultural policy which has been in place in other parts of Canada since 1971 under Pierre Elliot Trudeau's Liberal government.

While on the one hand, multiculturalism is considered as a system which nurtures a pluralist view of society through tolerance for diversity, on the other hand inter-culturalism emphasizes the subordination of respect for diversity 'to the need to perpetuate the French-language culture',[52] which is itself a minority identity within Canada as a whole.

Therefore, Québec's inter-culturalism consists in a degree of assimilation of immigrants and minority groups in order to preserve Québécois identity and culture. One example of this type of gradual assimilation is the distinct immigration policy which started developing in the late 1970s in Quèbec, under the leadership of the Parti Québécois (Mahrouse 2010).

In 1990, the 'Québec ministère des communautés culturelles et de l'immigration' expressed the intention of inter-culturalism: to promote Québec citizenship (*citoyenneté Québécoise)* as a 'moral contract' between the host society (Québec) and immigrants, in order to create a 'common public culture'.[53]

The 'reasonable accommodation debate' involved a significant number of contentious cases which had a wide resonance in the media and public debate. Within the major cases involved, there was that of a Sikh

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[51] Mahrouse, G. (2010). '*Reasonable accommodation'in Québec: the limits of participation and dialogue*. Race & Class, *52*(1), 85-96.

[52] Bouchard, G., & Taylor, C. (2008). *Building the future: A time for reconciliation.*

[53] Satzewich, V., & Liodakis, N. (2013). "*Race" and Ethnicity in Canada: A Critical Introduction*. Oxford University Press.

boy who wanted to wear a ceremonial dagger to school (although a ban on all knives was an established rule in the school), or the case of an eleven years old girl who could not wear her hijab during a football game. Another case was that of a Montreal synagogue which advanced the request to install opaque windows in the gymnasium of the Young Men's Christian Association next door, in order to blur the view of people exercising so to impede that women in tight gym clothes were too visible from the outside.

However, the most famous case might be that occurred in 2007, when Hèrouxville (a small town in Quèbec), adopted a 'life standards' code of conduct for immigrants with the intend to ban Muslim residents to practise female genital mutilation, a practice associated with religious and cultural barbarianism. The municipal councillor of the town asked the Québec premier to acknowledge a 'state of emergency' to protect Québec culture from the practice of accommodating non-Christian beliefs and practices. [54]

3.2 The Bouchard-Taylor Commission

The high mediatic resonance caused by these cases triggered the general belief that the Québécois cultural identity and way of life was in a profound clash with the cultural and religious identities of minority populations. Indeed, many started to believe that Québec's local identity was in threat, along with the centrality of gender equality and secularism which had always characterised its national history (Mahrouse 2010). As a consequence of this public discontent, the claim for drawing a clear boundary within the cultural/religious majority and minority through a 'reasonable accommodation' was achieved via the establishment of a consultation commission. Indeed, on February 8th of 2007, the Québec Prime Minister Jean Charest officially established the *Consultation Commission on Accommodation Practices Related to Cultural Differences*, led by two notorious, high profile personalities: Gérdard Bouchard and Charles Taylor (whose Politics of Recognition I have already discussed) respectively, a well- known sociologist and a prominent philosopher of multiculturalism.

The Bouchard-Taylor Commission had a massive organization base, consisting of thirteen research projects carried out by specialists from Québec universities, thirty-one focus groups, fifty-nine meetings with experts, and an advisory committee composed by fifteen specialists from various disciplines. What is more, 241 individuals had the chance to witness and engage in discussion with the Commissioners. In addition to that, the Commission had as its key component four province-wide citizens' forums in Montreal, open to the public without restrictions, and sessions in fifteen Québec regions. [55]

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[54] Immigrant debate has "gone too far": Charest', *CBC News* (6 February 2007), <http://www. cbc.ca/canada/montreal/story/2007/02/06/qc-herouxville20070206.html>.

[55] Bouchard, G., & Taylor, C. (2008). *Building the future: A time for reconciliation*.

In April 2008, the final report *Building the Future: a time for reconciliation*, was made public. It examined four main issues, namely: cultural integration, collective identity, church-state relations and an analysis of the most suitable procedures for managing cultural and religious harmonization. Indeed, as we can read from the Final Report (2008) the broadly defined mandate was to:

> a)   take stock of accommodation practices in Québec; b) analyse the attendant issues bearing in mind the experience of other societies; c) conduct an extensive consultation on this topic; and d) formulate recommendations to the government to ensure that accommodation practices conform to Québec's values as a pluralistic, democratic, egalitarian society.

Then, the Final Report offered a synthesis, an analysis, conclusions and recommendations. The Commissioners chose to approach the study in a broad sense rather than narrowing the focus of the investigation strictly to the legal dimension of reasonable accommodation. In their own words (Bouchard & Taylor, 2008), they chose to "perceive the debate on reasonable accommodation as the symptom of a more basic problem concerning the sociocultural integration model established in Québec since the 1970s. This perspective called for a review of inter-culturalism, immigration, secularism and the theme of Québec identity". The aim of taking this wider perspective was to "grasp the problem at its source and from all angles, with particular emphasis on its economic and social dimensions". This, also included a general attention towards the fight against discrimination as "an essential condition for ensuring the cultural integration of all citizens into Québec society". In relation to this, one of the five recommendations presented by Bouchard and Taylor in their introduction to the Final Report refers to the fight against inequality and discrimination, focusing primarily on:

> a)   the under-representation of ethnic minorities in the government; b) the urgency of combating the numerous forms of discrimination, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism and the racism to which racialized groups, especially Blacks, are subject; c) the sup- port to be offered immigrant women; d) the need to increase the resources of the commission des droits de la personne et des droits de la jeunesse; and e) the strengthening of economic and social rights in the Québec charter.[56]

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[56] Bouchard, G., & Taylor, C. (2008). *Building the future: A time for reconciliation*.

3.3 The intercultural model of integration

By and large, the Commissioner asserted a normative conception of sociocultural integration in a pluralist society which they called «inter-culturalism» and which they conceived as an alternative to «multiculturalism».

Henceforth, the Co-Chairs proposed an integration process bound to all members of the society, including marginalized and underprivileged groups, comprising multi-layered dimensions but, given their specific mandate, with a particular attention towards the cultural dimension.
Within the models of cultural integration, we find two main models: the "assimilationist" and the "multiculturalist" models. [57] While the assimilationist model prioritizes unity and continuity and fosters the assimilation of all citizens to one common culture (the dominant one), relegating cultural differences to the private sphere, the multiculturalist model of integration rather gives precedence to the promotion of ethnocultural diversity, nurturing the recognition and accommodation of the cultural and religious differences in constituting the citizens' identities (Trembley, 2010).

In opposition, the Commissioners advanced an "interculturalist" model of integration which fosters ethnocultural interactions in a spirit of respect for differences, places a variable emphasis on unity and continuity, through ethnocultural approaches, such as exchanges, communication, interaction, cooperation, establishment of a common culture, intercommunity action, and mutual enrichment without promoting the assimilation to one particular culture. Indeed, what stands out from the Report is that inter-culturalism seeks a balance between unity and continuity and between the diversity that fosters both the formation of a common collective identity and respect for ethnocultural diversity. In this way, it pursues security both to the dominant cultural group and to ethnocultural minorities and respects the rights of all. Therefore, inter-culturalism appears as a just measure between the assimilationist and the multiculturalist models, even though as an integration policy it has never been fully, officially defined by the Québec government. According to the Commissioners "this shortcoming should be overcome, all the more so as the Canadian multiculturalism model does not appear to be well adapted to conditions in Québec". [58]

According to the Report (2008), the importance of the integrative dimension as a key to Québec inter-culturalism lies in the fact that "for a small nation such as Québec, constantly concerned about its future as a

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[57] Tremblay, L. B. (2010). *The Bouchard-taylor report on cultural and religious accommodation: multiculturalism by any other name*. Rev. Const. Stud., 15, 35.

[58] Bouchard, G., & Taylor, C. (2008). *Building the future: A time for reconciliation*.

cultural minority, integration also represents a condition for its development, or perhaps for its survival". Indeed, to summarize the Québec inter-culturalism:

"a) institutes French as the common language of intercultural relations; b) cultivates a pluralistic orientation that is concerned with the protection of rights; c) preserves the necessary creative tension between diversity, on the one hand, and the continuity of the French-speaking core and the social link, on the other hand; d) places special emphasis on integration and participation; and e) advocates interaction". (p. 121)

3.4 Inter-culturalism as a critique of Multiculturalism

In the Report on reasonable accommodation, Bouchard and Taylor (2008) compared the two different integration policies of inter-culturalism and multiculturalism, which respectively represent Québec and Canada. According to the text (2008), inter-culturalism is a paradigm that stimulates social cohesion and integration through communal values, and the respect of differences and diversity. On the contrary, multiculturalism is represented by Bouchard and Taylor as inadequate for Québec mainly because it is not adequate to address Quebec's language preoccupations, the desire to preserve its culture and its status as a minority in Canada (p.122).

As Bouchard observed in 2011, "(…) for political reasons, all Québec governments (federalist or not) have rejected multiculturalism since its adoption by the federal government in 1971.[59]

According to the opposers, multiculturalism denies to Quebec the opportunity to constitute itself as the "principal rallying point of identity for its inhabitants"[60] and treats Quebeckers as just another cultural group in the Canadian 'cultural mosaic' instead of as a distinct society and a nation. In this sense inter-culturalism is a criticism of multiculturalism's concept of the cultural mosaic. Indeed, according the perpetrators, inter-culturalism is not assimilationist but not excessively culturally relativistic and fragmentary as multiculturalism is perceived to be. Instead, it seeks balance between unity, through shared identity points of reference, and the recognition of different cultures.

Moreover, another inadequacy of multiculturalism is assessed as its non-responsive character towards Quebec's linguistic and identity anxieties. In fact, due to its 'minoritarian' status in North America, Québec is concerned with safeguarding the French language, and according to Bouchard (2011) inter-culturalism reflects the need to "develop a form of pluralism that acknowledges that the francophone majority is itself a

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[59] Bouchard, G. (2011). *What is interculturalism?* McGill Law Journal 56(2): 435-68

[60] Gagnon, A. G. (2000). *Plaidoyer pour l'interculturalisme*. Possibles, 24(4), 11-25.

precarious minority that needs protection in order to ensure its survival and development in the North American environment and in the context of globalization" (p. 441).

Another weakness of multiculturalism according to its opposers is the ambiguity of the concept itself.

Thornhill (1999) argues that "multiculturalism" has many meanings and that for some, it may be a tool to preserve human rights, an anti-French tool, a demographic reality, a social contract, or the elimination of racism and racial discrimination. Therefore, according to Thornhill multiculturalism has an ambiguous definition. [61]

Modood and Meer argue that multiculturalism (unlike interculturalism) addresses only the needs of minorities, ignoring the wider section of majority culture. Indeed, within the blames of multiculturalism there is as well that it underemphasizes the needs of the majority which instead is pursued by inter-culturalism which recognizes and official culture while respecting cultural diversity. [62]

According to Bouchard (2011), despite the fact that inter-culturalism takes into account the desire for perpetuation of the majority culture, it nevertheless prevents the excesses of the majority culture on minorities. In his words: "as long as the nature and the reach of ad hoc precedence [of the majority culture] are carefully circumscribed it can avoid the excesses of ethnicism while giving some advantages (or the needed protection) to the majority culture".[63] Multiculturalism is different in that since it does not recognize a majority culture in Canada.

A final critique which is advanced against multiculturalism is its form of assimilation of immigrants and cultural minorities into the dominant English culture to preserve the state's national identity. [64]

On the other hand, inter-culturalism is stronger because it guarantees the integrations of immigrants, being based on a moral contract between immigrants and the host society. Gagnon (2000) argues that the main elements of the social contract -feature of inter-culturalism are the use of French as the communal language, democracy, and openness to diversity within the limits of fundamental democratic values. Therefore, the members of the host society expect members of cultural communities to contribute to the development of the social fabric and to the public common culture with their participation. [65]

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[61] Thornhill, E. M. A. (1999). *Multicultural and Intercultural Education: The Canadian Experience*. Revue quebecoise de droit international, 12-1, p. 79-92. HeinOnline

[62] Modood, T., and Meer, N. (2012). *How does Interculturalism Contrast with Multiculturalism?*. Journal of Intercultural Studies, 33-2, p. 175-196. Taylor and Francis.

[63] Bouchard, G. (2011). *What is interculturalism?* McGill Law Journal 56(2): 435-68

[64] James, C. E. (2011). *Multicultural Education in a Color-Blind Society*. In C. A. Grant & A. Portera (Eds.), *Intercultural and Multicultural Education: Enhancing Global Interconnectedness* (p. 191-210). New York: Routledge.

[65] Gagnon, A. G. (2000). *Plaidoyer pour l'interculturalisme*. Possibles, 24(4), 11-25.

Conclusion

Much of the contemporary political debate about multiculturalism focuses on whether it is the appropriate way to deal with cultural diversity and minority rights. Nevertheless, in my elaborate I showed how the conceptual differences over the meaning of multiculturalism itself have often lead to confusion and general misunderstanding when debating its challenges and benefits. Indeed, the different political models of multiculturalism which I have exposed in chapter two caused some scepticism, both with respect to liberal and multicultural theories as well as the applicability of these theories in practice.

I reckon that the complexity of the multicultural issues and the variety of ways in which these issues are approached have many positive aspects, but at the same time they depict a fragmentated picture which cannot be assessed as a particular positive development for this field of study.

I also illustrated that the integration of multiculturalism with liberalism is not that impossible. I have showed this through Kymlicka's theory of the bonding between liberalism and multiculturalism in which minority rights are conceived as the appropriate measures to make the individuals autonomous within their own culture which in turns provides with a context upon which everyone can base his/her individualism. On the other hand, I showed how others contrast the assumption of individualism as problematic, such as Taylor and Parekh who stress the specificity of the social and cultural communitarian condition in which humans are born and which provides us with identity. Concerning this, I argued that according to these scholars. individuals are not 'atomized' but rather bond to social and cultural anchors.

However, even though I wouldn't say that multiculturalism has completely failed, there are some major cases in the recent European political history which cannot be shadowed, such as Angela Markel's proclamation of an utter fail of multiculturalism in Germany, or Sarkozy's declaration in France which evokes the German one, or the strong assessment of British Prime Minister David Cameron who considered his country's policy of multiculturalism as failing to promote a sense of common identity and even encouraging Muslim segregation and radicalization.

All in all, I illustrated the wide vernacular of the philosophical ideas which were advanced by political theorists of the philosophy of multiculturalism, and how these theorists have taken an active role beyond academic purposes. Indeed, in chapter three I argued as an example of this the role of Charles Taylor and Gerard Bouchard in their role as co-chairs on the Québec government's Consultation Commission on Accommodation Practices Related to Cultural Differences. Also, I exposed the intercultural integration policy which characterized their work.

In my opinion, inter-culturalism is a valid paradigm for thinking about diversity. Moreover, I have some doubts about multiculturalism's capacity to adapt to the new changes caused by globalisation and the

super diversity context which it has brought about. I believe that globalisation and the degree of diversity connected to it have created completely new relationship which don't consent to establish a notion of difference in terms of the minority-majority relationship within nations anymore.

According to my point of view, terms such as 'diversity' should be conveyed in a new way and this new way might be the language of inter-culturalism which is significantly associated with inter-dependency and integration. If this is achieved, people might reconsider the importance of the dominant culture and stop conceiving it as the common interest or the political correct way of meaning life. In this sense, inter-culturalism could represent a step forward and a break with the past by creating a new conception of what is different and, in general a fairer society.

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SUMMARY

L'avvento del multiculturalismo è databile dopo gli anni 80, precisamente come conseguenza della caduta dei regimi comunisti in Est Europa e della nuova ondata di nazionalismo che ha conseguentemente invaso alcune liberal-democrazie occidentali. Ora più che mai viviamo in delle società sempre più diversificate e multiculturali, in cui il fenomeno dell'immigrazione e delle minoranze culturali sono parte integrante dei dibattiti politici di ogni giorno.

Nella concezione di stato liberale vige fortemente l'idea che ogni individuo dovrebbe avere i diritti e le opportunità necessarie per perseguire in libertà la propria concezione del 'bene'. Pertanto, questo principio richiede che le persone che provengono da contesti diversi dalla maggioranza e che hanno diversi costumi e valori religiosi e culturali, dovrebbero perseguire la loro comprensione del bene senza rinunciare ai suddetti costumi e valori. Un altro aspetto importante dell'ideologia liberale sui diritti individuali è che nessuno stato o governo ha il diritto di concettualizzare un progetto di buona vita e imporlo ai suoi cittadini.

Detto ciò, possono il liberalismo e il multiculturalismo convivere? É forse il multiculturalismo l'unico paradigma di integrazione valido di cui lo stato liberale può usufruire? Il multiculturalismo, e quindi la diversità culturale, potrebbe essere definito come un dato di fatto che caratterizza le democrazie liberali contemporanee. Affermare ciò implica che tale circostanza debba essere considerata e affrontata dalle istituzioni. Pertanto, si possono considerare come multiculturali quelle teorie che cercano di rispondere alla domanda: in che modo le istituzioni politiche affrontano le questioni poste dalla presenza di culture diverse all'interno di una stessa nazione?

Centrale nel dibattito sul multiculturalismo è il fatto che, come conseguenza del processo di costruzione dello stato-nazione, le società sono strutturate secondo le norme sociali che riflettono le preferenze e le tradizioni della "maggioranza" che a sua volta determina ciò che viene definito "normale".

 È qui che le minoranze potrebbero incontrare difficoltà, ovvero nel vivere le loro vite cercando di adattarsi alla maggioranza. Ne segue una domanda spontanea: come risolvere l'ineguaglianza tra le condizioni della maggioranza e quelle della minoranza? Secondo la teoria liberale, lo stato dovrebbe interferire il meno possibile negli 'affari' dei diversi gruppi culturali e religiosi, altrimenti correrebbe il rischio di creare ineguaglianze tra i cittadini conferendo alle minoranze dei diritti che potremmo definire 'speciali'.

Alla luce di quanto ho sostenuto sopra, perché dovremmo quindi collegare insieme il multiculturalismo e il liberalismo? La risposta è semplice: storicamente il liberalismo è una teoria politica che pone la diversità come il suo principale nucleo teorico. Infatti, lo scopo principale del liberalismo in Europa tra il XVI e il XVII secolo, è stato quello di cercare le condizioni più adatte a rendere possibile la convivenza tra popoli con diverse credenze. Tuttavia, la differenza principale tra liberalismo e multiculturalismo consiste nel fatto che quest'ultimo si concentra sulla diversità tra gruppi culturali esistenti all'interno della stessa comunità politica, mentre il liberalismo presuppone che diverse credenze morali e

filosofiche già esistenti in una democrazia liberale siano aspetti della stessa cultura. La relazione tra le due correnti politico-filosofiche è sempre stata travagliata, e ha attraversato diverse fasi nel corso della storia. In particolare, alla fine della seconda guerra mondiale il liberalismo sembrava essere completamente distaccato dalle questioni culturali mettendo quindi in secondo piano l'appartenenza culturale dell'individuo. In generale, possiamo valutare tre diverse versioni del multiculturalismo alla luce del liberalismo.

Il primo considera i due come completamente compatibili tra loro, il secondo ritiene che il multiculturalismo richieda di andare oltre i tradizionali principi liberali, mentre l'ultimo nega qualsiasi legittimo riconoscimento della diversità culturale all'interno di uno stato liberale. Per quanto riguarda la prima versione, essa si è iniziata a sviluppare dagli anni '80 ed ha preso il nome di 'culturalismo liberale'.

I sostenitori di questa teoria, condividono la convinzione che i principi liberali siano pienamente in linea con il multiculturalismo. Inoltre, credono che il riconoscimento di alcuni diritti per le minoranze derivi dal valore della cultura e dall'appartenenza a un gruppo culturale per gli individui, qualcosa di estremamente lontano dal liberalismo classico che invece ha sempre negato il valore dell'appartenenza ad un gruppo culturale, essendo estremamente concentrato sull'individuo. Invece, secondo i sostenitori del culturalismo liberale le valide ragioni per cui i liberali dovrebbero prestare attenzione alla cultura e ai gruppi riguardano il fatto che la cultura è il contesto entro il quale l'individuo scopre l'opzione che gli consente di scegliere per dare un valore significativo alla sua vita e per realizzarsi come un essere autonomo.

Il liberalismo, essendo una teoria politica individualistica, è sempre stato incapace di difendere i diritti delle minoranze. In effetti, fino alla fine degli anni '80 le questioni relative ai diritti delle minoranze sono state percepite come una reazione generale all'astrattezza individualistica del liberalismo contemporaneo.

L'enfasi posta dal liberalismo sull'autonomia individuale e sull'individualismo morale è stata usata dai teorici comunitari come prova del fatto che il liberalismo è inadeguato a rendere conto della natura sociale dell'individuo e, di conseguenza, dei diritti delle minoranze. Il lavoro di Will Kymlicka è un tentativo di dimostrare che il liberalismo è in grado di elaborare una teoria efficace dei diritti delle minoranze.

Il filosofo canadese cerca di giustificare i diritti delle minoranze come se fossero degli strumenti per proteggere la comunità culturale la cui sopravvivenza è considerata essenziale per la libertà e l'eguaglianza delle persone di cui è composta. Kymlicka è un importante successore della tradizione liberale, pertanto egli pone l'autonomia individuale prima della comunità e dei valori comunitari. Come filosofia politica, il liberalismo è stato spesso visto come principalmente interessato al rapporto tra individuo e stato, e prevede intrusioni limitate da parte dello stato sulle libertà dei cittadini. A mio parere, questo può essere visto come una delle debolezze del liberalismo quando si tratta di affrontare i problemi relativi alle minoranze e ai diritti delle minoranze se ci si sofferma sull'idea che l'ideologia liberale sia l'unico tetto al di sotto del quale i valori sia della maggioranza che della minoranza possano essere rappresentati.

Il liberalismo come concepito da Kymlicka riconosce un valore fondamentale alla cultura e all'appartenenza culturale. Infatti, anche se afferma che in una società liberale la decisione su come vivere dipende dall'individuo, l'autore sostiene che ogni decisione implica una selezione all'interno delle opzioni

fornite dall'ambiente sociale. Per Kymlicka, questo ambiente è la cultura, che alla fine dà senso alla vita. Quindi, il valore che il liberalismo di Kymlicka attribuisce alla cultura, non è un valore autosufficiente, ma un valore che deriva dall'essere lo spazio entro il quale le scelte individuali sono prese e acquistano significato. Quando Kymlicka parla di cultura, si riferisce alla 'cultura societaria', ovvero una cultura territorialmente concentrata, basata su un linguaggio condiviso utilizzato in molte istituzioni sociali e nella vita pubblica o privata.

Egli fa una distinzione tra due tipi di diversità culturale, a cui corrispondono due tipi di Stati. Nel primo caso, la diversità culturale deriva dall'assorbimento in un più ampio stato territorialmente concentrato delle così dette "minoranze nazionali" per cui tale stato sarà definito come "multinazionale" e presenterà due o più culture societarie distinte, che non aspireranno all'assimilazione ma piuttosto a forme di autonomia che consentano loro di preservare la propria cultura specifica. L'immigrazione costituisce la seconda fonte di diversità culturale ed è vista come un fenomeno volontario attraverso il quale i migranti sono disposti ad integrarsi nella società ospitante; secondo il filosofo canadese, uno stato che contiene più comunità di immigrati è chiamato "poli-etnico". Tuttavia, è possibile sollevare alcune critiche sul modello proposto da Kymlicka.

In primo luogo, non è sempre detto che gli immigrati cerchino di integrarsi perfettamente nelle società in cui si ritrovano. Inoltre, anche l'idea che i fenomeni migratori siano sempre volontari può essere messa in discussione, basti pensare a coloro che chiedono asilo politico perché provenienti da paesi in condizioni critiche. Tra i diritti concessi alle minoranze Kymlicka distingue i diritti di autogoverno, i diritti polietnici e i diritti speciali di rappresentanza. I primi riguardano l'autonomia politica o la giurisdizione territoriale concessa alle minoranze nazionali, i secondi invece sono quei diritti che concedono agli immigrati e alle minoranze religiose l'espressione dei loro interessi culturali personali, mentre i terzi prevedono un possibile deficit rappresentativo dall'istituzione verso gli interessi delle minoranze. Considerando il fatto che questi diritti sono attribuiti all'individuo, essendo parte di un gruppo culturale, essi vengono definiti come "diritti collettivi". Ciò che è importante sottolineare è il fatto che i diritti delle minoranze non consentono al multiculturalismo di dare priorità alla "collettività" nei confronti dell'individuo perché i bisogni dei gruppi minoritari sono scarsamente correlati alla lotta tra collettivisti e individualisti sulla priorità degli individui o gruppi. Qual è allora la relazione tra i diritti delle minoranze e il liberalismo? Considerando che la centralità della libertà individuale nella teoria liberale, i diritti delle minoranze possono essere accettati da un punto di vista liberale solo quando non contraddicono il rispetto della libertà e dell'autonomia degli individui.

Pertanto, se si vuole dimostrare che questi diritti sono compatibili con i principi liberali, bisognerà dimostrare che fanno parte della legittimità degli individui di difendere la propria cultura. Da questa prospettiva liberale, gli individui diventano autonomi all'interno della propria cultura.

Ne consegue che se i diritti delle minoranze sono concepiti come misure che assicurano che ognuno abbia le condizioni necessarie per prosperare autonomamente. In sostanza secondo quanto affermato da Kymlicka non c'è motivo per i liberali di negare il riconoscimento di queste politiche a favore delle

minoranze culturali. Come accennato poco fa, alcune formulazioni del multiculturalismo sono caratterizzate da un atteggiamento critico nei confronti del liberalismo.

Queste teorie multiculturali sono anche definite post-liberali (o 'dell'inclusione') perché ritengono che una risposta adeguata alla diversità culturale richieda il superamento del liberalismo e dei suoi principi fondamentali. Piuttosto che considerare la diversità come un dato di fatto della realtà sociale, il multiculturalismo dell'inclusione aspira a valutare positivamente la diversità mostrando la ristrettezza delle teorie liberali classiche. Il punto di partenza per i sostenitori di questa forma di multiculturalismo è che le società democratiche liberali hanno in sé la tendenza a escludere le minoranze.

In breve, il multiculturalismo dell'inclusione mira al riconoscimento pubblico della diversità culturale, cioè all'accettazione di comportamenti, pratiche e identità diversi come opzioni normali e legittime che i cittadini di una società aperta possono avere a loro disposizione.

Ci sono tre possibili versioni del multiculturalismo dell'inclusione: la prima è elaborata da Charles Taylor, il quale sostiene che il riconoscimento è una componente essenziale del concetto di diritti e che gli individui possono essere riconosciuti come parte di un gruppo. Nella sua teoria Taylor parte dal presupposto che l'identità umana dipende in parte da come altri individui ci riconoscono e che un adeguato riconoscimento della propria identità è un fondamentale bisogno umano.

Sulla base di ciò, seguirà che la mancanza di riconoscimento porterà a vere e proprie forme di oppressione. Inoltre, Taylor sostiene che l'identità è necessariamente collettiva ma che gli individui non beneficiano dei diritti culturali solo perché essi sono di natura collettiva. In questo, la posizione di Taylor si scontra con la tradizione liberale che si basa sull'idea della libertà individuale e della neutralità che egli considera invece impossibile e indesiderabile, dal momento che il liberalismo impedisce di comprendere appieno che ogni società si basa su un'idea di bene comune diversa da quella ipotizzata dai liberali.

Per Taylor ogni cultura deve essere protetta e preservata, ancor più quando si tratta di culture minoritarie la cui sopravvivenza è minacciata dal potere della maggioranza.

Bhikhu Parekh ci fornisce un'altra versione del multiculturalismo dell'inclusione in cui critica il carattere universalistico del liberalismo contemporaneo e in cui introduce l'uso del dialogo interculturale come strumento fondamentale per la risoluzione dei conflitti tipici del multiculturalismo. Parekh afferma che sebbene il liberalismo aspiri ad essere una teoria universalista, esprime valori storicamente determinati, la cui accettazione in contesti diversi da quello in cui hanno avuto origine è profondamente problematica. La nozione di dialogo interculturale è centrale nel lavoro di Parekh nel mostrare i limiti del liberalismo. Il dialogo interculturale è considerato bifocale, nel senso che richiede una riflessione critica sia da parte della maggioranza che della minoranza, entrambe chiamate a mettere in discussione il proprio comportamento, e le proprie convinzioni e valori.

Nella terza teoria post-liberale sviluppata da Tariq Modood prevale invece l'attenzione sugli aspetti sociologici del multiculturalismo. Nella sua teoria multiculturale, l'autore parte dall'osservazione che i gruppi minoritari di immigrati rappresentano differenze che la maggioranza percepisce come deviazioni

dalla normalità. In questo scenario, è proprio il multiculturalismo che li rende qualcosa da apprezzare, difendere e promuovere. Fondamentalmente, il multiculturalismo costituisce un baluardo in loro difesa.

Al centro della teoria multiculturale di Modood troviamo tre parole chiave: uguaglianza, pluralità e integrazione. Questo tipo di multiculturalismo è inteso come una condizione di uguaglianza in cui le possibilità di vita di un individuo non devono essere negativamente influenzate dall'appartenenza dell'individuo in questione a un determinato gruppo economicamente o politicamente debole, o da pregiudizi e discriminazioni. In breve, quello che Modood vuole farci capire è che, in una società completamente multiculturale, ognuno può essere un cittadino, ma ognuno di noi è un cittadino a suo modo, cioè in modo coerente con il gruppo culturale di origine. Ne consegue che l'identità non è né rimossa né limitata nella sfera privata, ma entra nella sfera pubblica e la trasforma in un senso egualitario.

Tuttavia, nel dibattito politico-filosofico multiculturale sono anche presenti delle teorie che si propongono come alternative al multiculturalismo stesso e che anzi ne rappresentano una critica. Un esempio è l'interculturalismo, che ho analizzato riferendomi al caso del Québec, il quale nel 2006 è stato colpito da un intenso dibattito chiamato "Debate on Reasonable Accomodation", incentrato sulla misura in cui le pratiche dei gruppi di minoranza e di immigrati potessero essere accolte nella società locale.

In Québec, il contesto generale per la diffusione di questo dibattito è stato proprio l'interculturalismo, la politica che caratterizza la provincia, in contrasto con la politica multiculturale che è invece in atto in altre parti del Canada.

Nel caso del Québec, l'interculturalismo sottolinea la subordinazione del rispetto per la diversità alla necessità di perpetuare la cultura della lingua francese, che è essa stessa un'identità di minoranza all'interno del Canada. Pertanto, l'interculturalità del Québec consiste in un grado di assimilazione degli immigrati e dei gruppi di minoranza al fine di preservarne l'identità e la cultura.

Nel 1990, il "Québec ministère des communautés culturelles et de l'immigration" ha espresso l'intenzione dell'interculturalismo, ovvero promuovere la cittadinanza del Québec come un "contratto morale" tra la società ospitante e gli immigrati, al fine di creare una cultura pubblica comune.

Tale modello di integrazione promuove le interazioni etnoculturali in uno spirito di rispetto per le differenze, pone un'enfasi sulla comunicazione, interazione, cooperazione, istituzione di una cultura comune, e arricchimento reciproco senza privilegiare l'assimilazione ad una particolare cultura. In effetti, ciò che emerge dal Rapporto redatto nel 2008 dai due studiosi Gerard Bouchard e Charles Taylor, in occasione dell'istituzione della Commissione di consultazione sulle pratiche di accomodamento legate alle differenze culturali, è che l'interculturalità cerca un equilibrio tra unità e continuità e tra la diversità, che favorisce sia la formazione di un'identità collettiva comune che il rispetto per la diversità etnoculturale. In questo modo, persegue la sicurezza sia del gruppo culturale dominante che delle minoranze etnoculturali e rispetta i diritti di tutti. Pertanto, l'interculturalità appare come una giusta misura tra i modelli di assimilazione e quelli multiculturali. Nel Rapporto di Bouchard e Taylor le due diverse politiche di integrazione dell'interculturalità e del multiculturalismo sono messe a confronto.

Nel testo, il multiculturalismo è rappresentato come inadeguato per il Québec soprattutto perché non riesce ad affrontare le preoccupazioni linguistiche della regione, il desiderio di preservare la sua cultura e il suo status di minoranza in Canada.

Secondo gli oppositori, il multiculturalismo nega al Quebec l'opportunità di costituirsi come il principale punto di riferimento dell'identità per i suoi abitanti i quali vengono trattati come un altro gruppo nel "mosaico culturale" canadese anziché come una società distinta. In questo senso l'interculturalismo è una critica al concetto di multiculturalismo.

Infatti, secondo gli autori, interculturalità non è 'assimilazionista' ma neanche eccessivamente frammentaria come è percepito il multiculturalismo. Un'altra debolezza del multiculturalismo secondo i suoi oppositori è l'ambiguità del concetto stesso che per alcuni potrebbe essere uno strumento per preservare i diritti umani o una realtà demografica, un contratto sociale o l'eliminazione della discriminazione razziale. Pertanto, il multiculturalismo ha una definizione ambigua e diversamente dall'interculturalità affronta solo i bisogni delle minoranze, ignorando la sezione più ampia della cultura maggioritaria. In effetti, tra le accuse al multiculturalismo c'è anche il fatto che esso sottovaluta i bisogni della maggioranza che invece l'interculturalismo persegue perpetuando la cultura ufficiale nel rispetto della diversità ma comunque impedendo gli eccessi della cultura di maggioranza sulle minoranze.

Il multiculturalismo è diverso in quanto non riconosce una cultura maggioritaria in Canada. Una critica finale avanzata contro il multiculturalismo è la sua forma di assimilazione degli immigrati e delle minoranze culturali nella cultura dominante inglese per preservare l'identità nazionale dello stato.

D'altra parte, l'interculturalità è più forte perché garantisce l'integrazione degli immigrati, essendo basata su un contratto morale tra gli immigrati e la società ospitante. Pertanto, i membri della società di accoglienza si aspettano che i membri delle comunità culturali contribuiscano allo sviluppo del tessuto sociale e alla cultura comune pubblica con la loro partecipazione.

In conclusione, credo sia evidente come gran parte del dibattito politico contemporaneo sul multiculturalismo si concentri su quale sia il modo appropriato di affrontare la diversità culturale e i diritti delle minoranze. Tuttavia, nel mio elaborato ho mostrato come le differenze concettuali sul significato del multiculturalismo stesso abbiano spesso portato confusione e incomprensioni generali nel discuterne le sfide e i benefici. Riconosco che la complessità delle questioni multiculturali e la varietà dei modi in cui vengono affrontati questi problemi hanno molti aspetti positivi, ma allo stesso tempo rappresentano un quadro frammentato che non può essere valutato come uno sviluppo positivo particolare per questo campo di studi.

In più, ho esposto come l'integrazione del multiculturalismo con il liberalismo non sia del tutto impossibile attraverso la teoria di Kymlicka in cui i diritti delle minoranze sono concepiti come misure appropriate per rendere gli individui autonomi all'interno della propria cultura, che a loro volta fornisce un contesto su cui ognuno può basare il proprio individualismo.

D'altra parte, ho mostrato come altri contestino l'assunto dell'individualismo come problematico, come Taylor e Parekh che sottolineano la specificità della condizione sociale e culturale comunitaria in cui sono

nati gli esseri umani e che gli individui non sono "atomizzati" ma piuttosto legati ad ancore sociali e culturali. Nel complesso, ho illustrato l'ampio ventaglio delle idee politico-filosofiche che sono state avanzate dai teorici del multiculturalismo e come questi teorici hanno assunto un ruolo attivo al di là degli scopi accademici, come per esempio Taylor e Bouchard nel loro ruolo di co-presidenti della Commissione consultiva del governo del Québec sulle pratiche di accomodamento relative alle differenze culturali.

A tal proposito, ho esposto la politica di integrazione interculturale che ha caratterizzato il loro lavoro. A mio avviso, l'interculturalismo è un paradigma valido per pensare alla diversità.

Inoltre, nutro qualche dubbio sulla capacità del multiculturalismo di adattarsi ai nuovi cambiamenti causati dalla globalizzazione e dal contesto di super diversità che ha portato.

Credo che la globalizzazione e il grado di diversità ad essa collegato abbiano creato relazioni completamente nuove che non consentono più di stabilire una nozione di differenza esclusivamente in termini di relazione tra maggioranza e minoranza all'interno delle nazioni.

Secondo il mio punto di vista, termini come "diversità" dovrebbero essere trasmessi in un modo nuovo e questo nuovo modo potrebbe essere il linguaggio dell'interculturalità che è significativamente associato all'interdipendenza e all'integrazione. Se ciò viene raggiunto, le persone potrebbero riconsiderare l'importanza della cultura dominante e smettere di concepirla come l'interesse comune o come il modo politicamente corretto di intendere la vita. In questo senso, l'interculturalismo potrebbe rappresentare un passo avanti e una rottura con il passato creando una nuova concezione del diverso e, in generale, di una società più giusta.