

Political Theory in the 21st. Century

Prof : Michel Seymour

Contact : michel.seymour@umontreal.ca

Syllabus

Liberalism and the Political Accommodation of Multinational Pluralism

General Presentation

My main concern in these lectures is to reflect upon the conditions under which it would be possible to create, maintain and stabilize societies that are characterized by diversity. The type of diversity that I find especially important to address is the diversity that stems from polyethnic, pluricultural and multinational countries, that is, countries in which we find people with not only different ancestral origins, but also different cultural practices and different national affiliations. Let's call it deep diversity, for short. How is it possible to keep together a group of people with very diverse ethnic backgrounds, very diverse cultural practices and very diverse national affiliations? This is the main issue of concern to us all in this seminar.

For some, this problem can be resolved by the development of certain psychological attitudes or individual actions such as recognition, conversation, trust and tolerance. I do not intend to directly address the issues of recognition, conversation, trust and tolerance and their main uses for political philosophy in the lectures, but I will consider a general problem raised by the claim that psychological attitudes like those mentioned and others (consent) can play a foundational role in political philosophy. In the first few lectures, my purpose will be to discuss more generally the relevance of moral psychology for political philosophy, especially when the political problems we are dealing with concern ethnic, cultural and national diversity. Are the basic political principles to be derived from moral psychology? This is a general question that has a bearing on our use of concepts such as recognition, conversation, trust and tolerance but also on many other psychological concepts. It may be wondered how these notions could be useful and indeed be powerful enough to resolve ethnic, cultural and national conflicts, and therefore matters that have mostly a collective dimension.

Even if my main objective in these lectures is to try to find a solution to the accommodation of ethnic, cultural and national diversity within a single polity, I shall spend a lot of time in trying to reflect upon the virtues and vices of a philosophical approach that would strictly be based on moral psychology for issues that are mostly collective in nature. This will lead me to formulate an alternative approach which is, I believe, much more hospitable to the accommodation of ethnic, cultural and national diversity.

Let me reveal immediately the conclusion of my argument. A political philosophy that seeks to accommodate ethnic, cultural and national diversity should not be grounded on a moral psychology. It should instead be construed as a set of considerations that are strictly based on political principles,

that is, on principles that are related to the organization of society as a whole in its collective, institutional and constitutional dimensions.

In the second week, I shall illustrate how this alternative approach deals with the issue of self-determination.

During the course of this argument, I will take it for granted that the correct approach must be a liberal one. I endorse liberalism understood as a political philosophy (I remain neutral, for the sake of argument, concerning liberalism understood as an economic principle). I believe that a liberal political philosophy can accommodate ethnic, cultural and national diversity. But in order to do so, it must move away from the more comprehensive versions developed by John Locke, Immanuel Kant and John Stuart Mill that sought for a foundation in moral psychology, and embrace instead political liberalism, that is, the version of liberalism adopted by John Rawls. It is my belief that a correct understanding of political liberalism will show that it is much more hospitable to ethnic, cultural and national diversity. This may sound a bit surprising since Rawls did not write at all about national minorities, but he did write *The Law of Peoples* in which peoples are described as having collective rights. The peoples that he considers in this book are those organized into sovereign states, but he does so for the sake of simplicity and he acknowledges that peoples without states also have rights. So things are perhaps not as bleak as interpreters often seem to suggest concerning the accommodation of national diversity within the framework of a liberal political philosophy.

Evaluation

Students are required to write a paper on the general theme of the course («Liberalism and the Political Accommodation of Multinational Pluralism»). The paper must not exceed 9000 words. Deadline: 29th April 2011.

Liberalism and the Political Accommodation of Multinational Pluralism

Schedule

-February 28, 9,00 - 11,00 + 11,30 - 13,30 (Room 40.213 + 20.175): Introduction : Should Political Philosophy be founded on Moral Psychology ?
(John Rawls «Justice as Fairness: Political not Metaphysical», *Philosophy and Public Affairs*, Vol. 14, no 3, 1985, 223-251.)

-March 1, 9,00 - 11,00 + 11,30 - 13,30 (Room 40.213 + 20.175): Recognition
(Nancy Fraser «Recognition without Ethics», *Theory, Culture and Society*, 2001, vol.18 2-3, 21-42)

-March 2, 9,00 - 11,00 + 11,30 - 13,30 (Room 40.213 + 20.183): Negotiation, Deliberation, Conversation
(James Tully, «The Agonic Freedom of citizens», *Economy and Society*, Vol. 28, no 2, 1999, 161-182 ; Simone Chambers, «Deliberative Democracy Theory», *Annual Review of Political Science*, Vol. 6, 2003, 307-326 ; Charles Blattberg, «Patriotic, Not Deliberative Democracy», *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy* 6, no. 1, 2003, 155-74.)

-March 3, 9,00 - 11,00 + 11,30 - 13,30 (Room 40.213 + 20.183): Trust
(Daniel Weinstock «Building Trust and Divided Societies», *Journal of Political Philosophy*, Vol. 7, no 3, 1999, 287-307.

-March 4, 9,00 - 11,00 + 11,30 - 13,30 (Room 40.213 + 20.175): Tolerance
(Anna Elisabetta Galeotti, «Toleration and Contemporary Pluralism», *Ratio Juris*, Vol. 10, no 2, 1997, 223-235)

-March 8, 9,00 - 11,00 (Room 20.059) : Self-Determination
(John Rawls, «The Law of Peoples», *Critical Inquiry*, Vol. 20, no 1, 1993, 36-68.

-March 9, 9,00 - 11,00 (Room 20.059): Self-Determination
(Margaret Moore, *The Ethics of Nationalism*, Oxford University Press, Chapter 1)

-March 10, 9,00 - 11,00 (Room 20.059): Self-Determination
(James Tully, *The Unattained Yet Attainable Democracy. Canada and Quebec Face the New Century, The Desjardins Lectures*, McGill University, March 20, 2000.)

-March 10, 15,00 - 17,00 (Room 20.061): Self-Determination
Will Kymlicka, «Categorizing Groups, Categorizing States: Theorizing Minority Rights in a World of Deep Diversity», *Ethics & International Affairs*, Volume 23, no 4 2009

-March 11, 9,00 - 11,00 (Room 20.059): Self-Determination
(Michel Seymour, «Secession as a Remedial Right», *Inquiry*, Vol. 50, no 4, 2007, 395 - 423)

Additional Bibliography

Charles Blattberg, *Shall We Dance? A Patriotic Politics for Canada*, Montreal/Kingston, McGill / Queens University Press, 2003.

Simone Chambers, "New Constitutionalism: Democracy, Habermas, and Canadian Exceptionalism", *Canadian Political Philosophy*, Oxford, OUP, 2000, 63-77.

Anna Elisabetta Galeotti, "Citizenship and Equality: the Place for Toleration", *Political Theory*, Vol. 21, no4, 1993, 585-605.

Anna Elisabetta Galeotti, *Toleration as Recognition*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2002.

Axel Honneth, *The Struggles for Recognition. The Moral Grammar of Social Conflicts*, Polity Press, 1996.

Axel Honneth & Nancy Fraser, *Recognition or Redistribution ?*, New York, Verso, 2003.

Will Kymlicka, *Multicultural Odysseys*, Oxford, OUP, 2007.

Charles Larmore, "The Moral Basis of Political Liberalism", *Journal Of Philosophy*, 1999, 96, 12, 599-625.

Patchen Markell, *Bound by Recognition*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2003.

Wayne Norman, *Negotiating Nationalism : Nation-Building, Federalism and Secession in the Multination State*, Oxford, OUP, 2006.

John Rawls, *Political Liberalism*, NewYork, Columbia University Press, 1993.

John Rawls, *The Law of Peoples*, Cambridge : Mass., Harvard University Press, 1999.

Michel Seymour, "On Not finding Our Way", in Alain G Gagnon (ed), *Contemporary Canadian Federalism*, Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 2009, 187-212.

Supreme Court of Canada, *Reference Case on the Secession of Quebec*, [1998] 2 R.C.S. 217.

Charles Taylor, "The Politics of Recognition", in Amy Gutmann (ed), *Multiculturalism: Examining The Politics of Recognition*, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994.

James Tully, "Introduction", in Alain G Gagnon & Jim Tully (eds), *Multinational Democracies*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2001.