Andrea Catanzaro: Ph.d in Social and Economic Science (curriculum: Political thought and Political Communication). He is Assistant Professor of History of Political Thought at the University of Genoa. He is member of the editorial board of "Il Pensiero politico".

Federica Falchi: Ph.d in History of Political Thought and Gender Studies (University of Rome3) is Assistant Professor in History of Political thought at the Department of Social Sciences and Institutions (University of Cagliari). She is member of the editorial board of the journal "Storia e Politica".

Sara Lagi: Ph.d in History of Modern and Contemporary Political Thought at the University of Perugia. She is Assistant Professor of History of Political Thought (University of Turin). She is member of the editorial board of the journal "Il Pensiero politico".
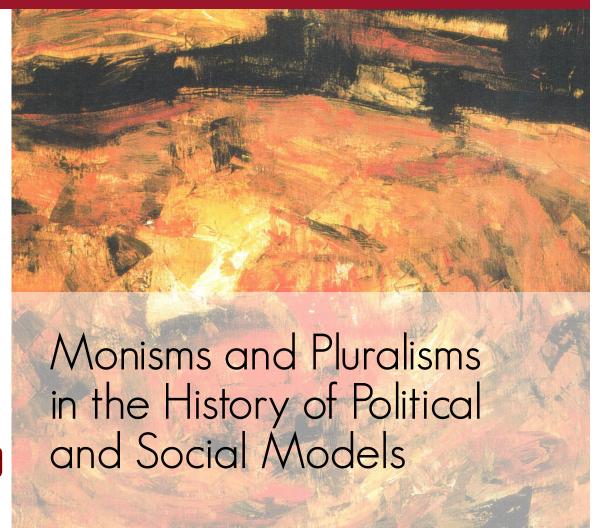
After the first volume on *Monisms and Pluralisms in the History of Political Thought*, the present work aims at further broadening our reflection on the concepts of monism and pluralism beyond Isaiah Berlin's popular dichotomy, while being conscious of how powerfully they penetrated into our language and society. With this purpose the authors of the essays here collected addressed a series of social and political models having monist and/or pluralist connotation, while showing how — in historical terms — the ideal *connection* between pluralism-liberty and monism-lack of it, which is generally taken for granted, becomes more nuanced and problematic.

In this sense, the present work wants to show how just the History of social and political models offers us a series of *diversified pluralisms* and *diversified monisms*. A kind of achievement which might be useful in our time, characterized by a sort of attitude towards easy generalizations.

euro 18,00

Catanzaro | Falchi | Lagi

Monisms and Pluralisms in the History of Political and Social Models

edited by
Andrea Catanzaro
Federica Falchi
Sara Lagi

Monisms and Pluralisms in the History of Political and Social Models

POLITICAL SCIENCES

Edited by
Andrea Catanzaro
Federica Falchi
Sara Lagi

Monisms and Pluralisms in the History of Political and Social Models

Indice

Monisms and pluralisms in the history of Political and Social Models

Sara Lagi and Andrea Catanzaro

1. Starting from the beginning: Isaiah Berlin's concept of monism and pluralism

In our first book on "Monisms and Pluralisms in the History of Political Thought" (Catanzaro-Lagi: 2016) we aimed at problematizing the concepts of monism and pluralism through the perspective of the History of Political thought, while being conscious of how deeply they penetrated into our language. By discussing a series of political theories with a focus on historical context we tried to show the existence of "diversified monisms" and "diversified pluralisms". In other terms, we sought to prove how monism and pluralism (as a term and as a concept) entail a variety of political-philosophical implications and therefore how difficult an overgeneralized definition of both can be. The present book starts exactly from this observation with the objective to further develop it through some (for us interesting) examples of political and social models. Just because we want again to critically reflect on the political meaning(s) of monism and pluralism it is relevant for us to re-focus on the thinker who contributed the most

to elaborate the philosophical and political contraposition between the two concepts: Isaiah Berlin.

In 1958 the already internationally recognized scholar Isaiah Berlin (1909-1997) was invited to deliver an inaugural lecture (Prolusion) at Oxford University after accepting one year earlier the Chair of Social and Political Thought in the same University. The title of his lecture – which was published in 1969 as an autonomous writing (Berlin: 1969)[1] – was *Two Concepts of Liberty* and very soon it became a major topic for discussion within the international intellectual environment because it delineated the problem of liberty through the lens of two – in Berlin's mind – distinct concepts: *monism and pluralism*.[2]

On the one hand, Berlin tended to identify a positive liberty and a negative kind of liberty and on the other, he conceptually related the first to monism and the latter to pluralism. More precisely, positive liberty was involved in the answer to the question:

> *what or who is the source of control or interference that can determine someone to do, or be, this rather than that?" whereas the negative liberty was involved in the answer to the question: what is the area within which the subject […] is or should be left to do or be he is able to do or be, without interference by other persons? (Berlin 1969: 122).*

From these questions, Berlin elaborated a reflection in terms of the History of ideas[3] leading him to conceptually relate positive liberty to the principle of "self-determination" and negative liberty to that of "being free from external interference" (Berlin 1969: 123).

If negative liberty classically implied for Berlin the right for individuals to enjoy a sphere of private liberty which no one and nothing could limit or abuse, positive liberty was identified by him with the concept of "governing oneself", i.e. "self-determination"(Berlin 1969: 122 ss). In other words, in Berlin's view, negative liberty posed the problem (philosophical and political) of the limits of power, whereas positive liberty shifted the fo-

---

[1] We are referring to one of the most popular Berlin's work entitled Four Essays on Liberty.

[2] This first section of our Introduction is based in part on a series of reflections developed in (Lagi 2016: 139-153). We used the online version of Berlin's work, dating back to 1969, which is now available online at http://spot.colorado.edu.

[3] At Oxford Berlin had initially contacts with logical positivists such as Ayer who left a considerable impression on him, chiefly as far logical positivists' critique against methaphisical thought and particularly against Hegel was concerned. But soon, Berlin took distance from them to embrace a new kind of study, which was considered quite marginal within the Oxonien environment, i.e. the History of Ideas. It is likely that he approached this new kind of study through the philosopher R. G. Collingwood, whose classes Berlin attended during the Trinity Term in 1931 and who was the only scholar at that time to openly recall to the History of Ideas (Ignatieff 1998: 56)

cus on the source of power and the problem of legitimising it in terms of "self-determination" (human and political). More precisely, Berlin thought that, within the History of Ideas, the concept of "governing oneself" had been gradually assimilated to that of "rational self-determination" which fundamentally contained, in his opinion, another kind of conceptual identification of huge relevance, i.e. the idea that "the only true method of attaining freedom […] is by the use of critical reason, the understanding of what is necessary and what is contingent" (Berlin 1969: 144). For Berlin, the ideal, ethical and political consequences of applying this concept pf liberty to human reality could (and, in his opinion, it have actually been) immense:

> *For, If I am rational, I cannot deny that what is right for me must, for the same reason, be right for others who are rational like me. A rational (or free) state would be a state governed by such laws as all rational men would freely accept; that is to say, such laws as they would themselves have enacted had they been asked what, as rational beings, they demanded; hence the frontiers would be such as all rational men would consider to be the right frontiers for rational beings (Berlin 1969: 145).*

From this perspective, which connected "being free" with "being rational" and which, according to Berlin, characterized in depth the so-called positive liberty, once found out the rational and therefore correct way of being free and living free, the path to a full "self-determination" was reached:

> *All truths could be discovered by any rational principles and demonstrated so clearly that all other rational men could not but accept them; […] On this assumption, the problem of political liberty was soluble by establishing a just order that would give to each man all freedom to which a rational being was entitled (Berlin 1969: 145).*

This kind of view, underpinning the positive concept of liberty, posed a chief problem (philosophical and political) for Berlin. Once identified – he observed – the (supposed) true and correct form of carrying out the principle of "self-determination", i.e. the "just order" to make it real, what would happen to all those who could disagree just with that "order" and its representatives? Their disagree and their "being recalcitrant" would not be simply considered as an expression of their individual opinions and beliefs but as something more dangerous and potentially destructive, as the refusal of a system which was rational and therefore the only one capable of making people truly free; they would become a serious threat to a state of things considered intrinsically and objectively just, because of its rationality (Berlin 1969: 145-146):

> *Freedom is self-mastery, the elimination of obstacles to my will, whatever these obstacles may be [...] But how am I to treat recalcitrant human beings? I must, if I can, impose, my will on them too; "mould" them to my patterns. [...] Will this not mean that I am free and I alone am free, while they are slaves? They will be so if my plan had nothing to do with their wishes [...] but if my plan is fully rational, it will allow the full the full development of their "true" natures, the realisation of their capacities for rational decisions (Berlin: 146).*

It is clear how in Berlin's view the positive concept of liberty, if carried out, would lead to the aftermath of political systems in which paradoxically someone could be "forced" even with the use of violence to be "free" in the name of a plan, an ideology, or a revolutionary thought supposed to be rational and just. Following Berlin's reasoning, once found the (rational) solution to the problem of how to achieve "self-determination", all those principles, values, plans or simply opinions diverging and conflicting with it had to be eliminated (Berlin 1969: 146 ss).

What Berlin stressed a lot in this part of his Prolusion was just the fact that the concept of positive liberty – differently from that of negative liberty – implied the idea – not to say certainty – that objectively true (since rational) and therefore objectively valid solutions to human, ethical and political problems and questions, including that about how to fully "govern oneself" – could be attained. He defined this kind of *forma mentis* "monism" as opposed to that of "pluralism" (Berlin 1969: 167 ss).

In other words, in Berlin's view, positive and negative liberty were underpinned by two particular visions, *Weltanschauungen* – respectively – monism and pluralism. From his Prolusion of 1958 on, both monism and pluralism have been often associated with his person and intellectual work. Whereas pluralism – according to Berlin – was that kind of philosophical, ethical, political vision recognizing the complexity (and plurality) of life in terms of values, goals, ideas, aspirations, monism – as we have already stressed – referred to the opposite concept, resulting in a vision which seemed to reduce human life in all its aspects to a single model, a single idea or principle (theoretical, political, ethical), supposed to be the quintessential of truth (Berlin 1969: 167-172).

On the basis of our previous observations, the ideal connection between pluralism and negative liberty on the one hand and monism and positive liberty on the other clearly takes shape. Negative liberty meant to Berlin "being free form interference" and this implied – in his perspective – the recognition of the individual as bearer of a sphere of liberty and fundamental rights within which one can decide to pursue specific goals, embrace values, support ideas and principles suited to one's own way of life, within which one has to deal with different values and ends, all of ultimate relevance:

The world that we encounter in ordinary experience is one in which we are faced with choices between ends equally ultimate, and claims equally absolute, the realisation of some of which must inevitably involve the sacrifice of others. Indeed, it is because this their situation that men place such immense value upon the freedom to choose; for if they had assurance that in some perfect state, realisable by men on earth, no end pursued by them would ever be in conflict, the necessity and agony of choice would disappear, and with it the central importance of the freedom to choose" (Berlin 1969: 168).

As we can assume from the aforementioned quote, the concept of negative liberty contains, according to Berlin, a pluralist *Weltanschauung* recognizing "individual freedom" and "freedom of choice" because accepting the existence of more than one single end, more than one single value, more than one single specific – and supposed as universally valid – idea of how the world works or how it should work. Instead, the recognition of the extreme complexity and plurality of reality (human, philosophical, ethical, political) is exactly what – in Berlin's opinion – lacks to monism (Berlin 1969: 168 ss).

As previously stated, Berlin thought that positive liberty – with its principle of liberty as "self-determination" – inevitably led to assimilating the concept of liberty with that of power and therefore potentially legitimising any form of coercion and abuse – of that individual sphere of liberty otherwise characterizing the concept of negative liberty and pluralism – in the name of "self-determination". Once a Leader, a Party or any Institution claimed to be able to carry out on earth a perfect condition of "self determination" for everyone, liberty and submission, according to Berlin's reasoning, came paradoxically to coincide and this was nothing but a perverse form of slavery (Berlin 1969: 152-154). To this, he opposed pluralism and therefore the concept of negative liberty:

Pluralism, with the measure of "negative" liberty that it entails seems to me a truer and more humane ideal than the goals of those who seek in the great disciplined, authoritarian structures the ideal of "positive" self-mastery but classes, or peoples, or the whole of mankind. It is truer, because it does, at least, recognise the fact that human goals are many, not all of them commensurable, and in perpetual rivarly with one another. […] It is more humane because it does not (as the system-builders do) deprive men, in the name of some remote, or incoherent, ideal, of much that they have found to be indispensable to their life as unpredictably self-transforming human beings (Berlin 1969: 171).

There is an extensive academic literature – chiefly of philosophical connotation – on Berlin's idea of monism and pluralism, on the interconnection between monism-positive liberty and pluralism-negative liberty and chiefly on

value-pluralism.[4] Prominent scholars, such as Peter Gray and George Crowder, have for a long time reflected, for example, on the interplay in Berlin's work between liberalism and value pluralism.[5]

From the perspective of the History of Political Thought, Berlin's dichotomy between monism and pluralism reflected in part the particular way he had internalized and interpreted, in terms of the History of Ideas, a century-long tradition of philosophical and political thought. Spinoza, Kant, Rousseau, Schelling and Fichte represented to him – among many other thinkers – some of the founding and spiritual fathers of the concept of monism and positive liberty, whereas Constant, Mill, Tocqueville, Burke (and many other) those of pluralism and negative liberty.[6] Kant had been the first to make a basic distinction – for Berlin one of the turning points in the History of Ideas – between "True and False Myself" i.e. between "Rational and Irrational Myself", resulting in a particular way of conceptualizing liberty as the "ability of True Myself" to govern over the "False Myself" (Berlin 1969: 148-152). Some years earlier than Kant, Rousseau had already developed the political theory of the *Contract Social* in which "political body" could "not hurt" or coerce anyone because it was "built on the equality of sacrifice of all its members" (Berlin 1969: 148). For Berlin, both Kant and Rousseau shared one basic assumption, that "the rational ends of our true natures must coincide, or be made coincide, however violently or poor, […] [because] freedom is not freedom to do what is irrational, or stupid, or wrong" (Berlin 1969: 148). A kind of assumption which was, for Berlin, fully and coherently monist.

The two philosophers of the Enlightenment were not the only to have contributed with their work to the shaping of a certain monist way of thinking liberty. During the Romantic age, according to Berlin, another major turning point took place: the "True Myself", especially (although not only) through thinkers such as Schelling and Fichte, came to be conceptually identified with the "creative Will" of the Subject, capable of creating, transforming, changing life (and human beings' life) at any cost (Berlin 1969: 148-152); this subject could be an individual, a Party, a political regime but the result, for Berlin, was inevitably that:

---

[4] Just to give some bibliographical references: (Baum-Nichols: 2013), (Crowder: 2004), (Crowder-Hardy: 2006), (Cherniss: 2013), (Dubnov: 2012), (Galstone: 2002), (Gray: 2013), (Galipeau: 1994), (Ignatieff: 1998),(Jahanbegloo: 1992), (Kelley: 1986), (Lukes: 1994), (Hausheer: 1979), (Ricciardi: 2011). In Berlin's intellectual trajectory, the Prolusion of 1958 was a relevant turning point because from then on he devoted more and more attention to the problem of pluralism and value pluralism. See (Gray: 2013).

[5] (Crowder: 2002); (Crowder: 2004); (Gray: 2013). A very good bibliography of the works published in support and against Berlin's dichotomy between positive and negative liberty is included in (Harris: 2004).

[6] Textual references to these thinkers are disseminated throughout his Prolusion. In particular see: (Berlin 1969: 152 ss; 160-166).

humanity is the raw material upon which I impose my creative will; even though men suffer and die in the process, they are lifted to the height to which thy could never have risen without my coercive – but creative – violation of their lives. This is the argument used by every dictator (Berlin 1969: 148).

The concept of Creative Will and that of "the rational govern of oneself" contained – according to Berlin's analysis – a strongly monist vision. On the opposite side of the barricade, Berlin mentioned thinkers such as Constant,[7] Mill, Tocqueville, the representatives of the 19th Liberal tradition, whose main merit, in his opinion, had been to realize that being free was not only and could not be univocally identified with the problem of finding and carrying out an allegedly "just (and rational) order" (Berlin 1969: 163-165). In other terms, for Berlin, Liberal thinkers had realized that any political system (even a democratic one) could hurt its citizens (for example through the "tyranny of majority"), unless two important conditions were granted: no power can be considered absolute – which meant also, according to Berlin, that no political principle was so noble and high to justify violence, abuses and oppression – and there is a sphere of personal freedom which should be considered as intangible; a sphere made up by rights, principles and rules which should never "be broken" (Berlin 1969: 163 ss).

it is such rules as these that are broken when a man is declared guilty without a trial, or punished under a retroactive law; when children are ordered to denounce their parents, […] when men are tortured or murdered, or minorities massacred […] Such acts, even if they are made legal by the sovereign cause horror even in these days; and this springs from the moral recognition of the moral validity of some absolute barriers […] The freedom of society […], in this sense of freedom, is measured by the strength of these barriers (Berlin: 166).

In these pages, Berlin delineated the contrast between positive liberty-monism, on the one hand, and negative liberty-pluralism in a very strong and vivid way. Each of the two, as we have tried to highlight, seemed to reflect two – in Berlin's mind – different lines of thought and two different visions of the world. At the same time, we can comprehend how Berlin's dichotomy between negative and positive liberty as well as that between pluralism and monism were in debt towards part of Liberal tradition.[8]

It is likewise clear how Berlin's vision and critique of monism and his definition of positive liberty had also a strong reference to the particular historical and political background, in which he lived. Berlin had experienced, although

---

[7] Berlin's positive and negative liberty seemed to rechoe Constant's liberty of ancients and moderns. See (Cherniss: 2013).

[8] For a complete analysis of Liberalism in the History of Political Thought see: (Bedeschi: 2015).

not in first person, the totalitarian age and after the end of the second world war he saw the international system redesigned according two big areas of influence: the Western and Eastern "camp".[9]

Part of scholarly literature flourished around Berlin's works (chiefly around those published during the late 40s and the Prolusion of 1958), such as *Generalissimo Stalin and the Art of Government* (1952), *The Hedgehog and the Fox* (1953) and *Historical Inevitability* (1954), has stressed the profound influence exercised by the Cold war political and ideological dynamics on Berlin's political philosophy. More precisely, Terry Hardin situated Berlin within the so-called *Cold War Liberalism.* By this term, Hardin identified first of all "a frame of mind", in which there was "no room for the theory of history or foundational truths adavanced by ideological cold warriors like Samuel Hungtington or Francis Fukuyama. It was epistemological skeptical, pluralist, and committed to a version of constitutional government that could ensure not only negative freedom but also provide some kind of social minimum, which its proponents saw as a condition for a stable civil association" (Hardin 2015: 1).

The same interpretation is shared by Ian Werner Mueller who observed in a recently published article how "Berlin, Aron and Popper all considered themselves engaged in an anti-Marxist war of ideas. Even when they spoke out against totalitarianism it was clear that Stalinism had been the critical template for their models of totalitarianism"(Mueller 2009?: 45?).

When Berlin condemned in the aforementioned passage the "system-builders" depriving men in the name of some remote ideal" and sacrificing human being to "the Altar of Ideals", he seemed to think about all totalitarian regimes, but specifically those of Communist inspiration, which he strongly opposed for all his life.[10]

If we relate in terms of the History of Political Thought Berlin's definition of pluralism and monism to the Twentieth century historical and political context we can grasp two relevant elements: first, his reflection on monism became in *Two Concepts of Liberty* (and not only)[11] a way to critically confront

---

[9] See in particular: (O'Sullivan: 1999).

[10] Berlin was a proudly anti-Soviet and anti-Stalinist for all his life. This is not also testified by his diplomatic activity on behalf of the British Diplomatic Service in Washington and New York, where he met prominent political and intellectual figures such John Schlesinger, George Kennan, Max Ascoli, Hamilton Fish Armstrong and many others, all sharing the same anti-Soviet attitude. It is instead to stress that in Berlin's work his anti-Soviet position never coincided with Russophobia. He was in fact a great admirer of the century-long Russian cultural tradition. He himself was born in Riga in 1909 and the very first language he learned before moving with his parents to England was Russian. Also, it is not to forget that one of his "points of references" and most beloved artists was the Russian Alexander Herzen, the father of Russian populism, whose thought would have been extremely influential – as Berlin himself stated – in the shaping of his idea of pluralism in opposition to monism. See: (Kelley 1986).

[11] The other major work in which he delineats the intellectual roots of monism as the ideological

the ultimate philosophical, ethical and political sense of totalitarianism as the incarnation and aftermath of a monist vision in its most tragic consequences; second, by defining pluralism in contrast to monism Berlin seemed to connect all together complexity of reality, plurality of values and ends, freedom to chose and negative liberty. In other words, in his celebrated Prolusion of 1958 monism ended up acquiring a negative (philosophical, ethical and political) connotation whereas pluralism a positive one.

The present work is a collection of thirteen essays whose authors, despite the diversity of historical periods and political thinkers that they have taken into consideration, started all from bearing in mind Berlin's popular definition of monism and pluralism, with the objective to understand in what sense and whether – from the perspective of the History of Social and Political models – these two concepts entail a more articulated and varied range of meanings and implications.

2. BEYOND ISAIAH BERLIN: MONISMS AND PLURALISMS IN THE HISTORY OF POLITICAL AND SOCIAL MODELS

The starting point of our work on *Monisms and Pluralisms in the History of Political and Social Models* is exactly Isaiah Berlin's reflection on the meaning of monism and pluralism, previously outlined in relation to the concept of negative and positive liberty, but our objective – as stated previously – was basically to try problematizing it. An attempt which is based on the consciousness that Berlin's definition of monism and pluralism reflected, as we sought to show, his particular philosophical and political sensitivity of liberal connotation and his personal way of interpreting (and confronting) the totalitarian experience.

First of all, like in our first work on monisms and pluralisms in the history of political thought, we were deeply steadfast in not approaching the topic of our work from a mere theoretical perspective but from the historical one: it was easy enough to think of relating it to the idea of political and social mod-

---

heart of totalitarianism was Historical Inevitabiltity (1954). Here, Berlin discusses about determinist philosophies, identifying differet typologies but all sharing, in his opnion, the common convinction that reality (in social, political, economic or moral terms) can be explained trough a single, universally valid principle or Law which allow us to understand how reality works and towards where it is going, which allow us to make predictions and realize what our place in the world is. According to Berlin, most of determinst conceptions as they had taken shape throughout the History of Ideas, could be seen in part as strongly influenced by a certain part of the Enlightenment and Rationalist tradition of thought (Berlin 1954: 19-25).

els as it was sketched out by Salvo Mastellone (Mastellone: 1983; 1993; 2011) and developed by scholars coming from different Italian Universities (Carini: 1990; Comparato: 1989; 1993; Campos Boralevi-Quaglioni: 2002): i.e. the idea that over centuries specific political and social systems were considered as "examples" to follow, from which drawing inspiration, in order to reform and improve one's social and political reality or – instead – how new social and political systems were imagined and thus proposed as models, in other words as "examples", to be carried out, often in frontal opposition to an existing reality considered as negative, unjust.

In this collection of essays, the authors have addressed different thinkers confronting the problem of social and political models in the History of Political thought and each of these models has been investigated in relation to the problem of monism and pluralism. Consequently, it becomes necessary for us to introduce how in this work we approached Berlin's celebrated and popular dichotomy.

Generally speaking, monism and pluralism as terms and concepts can not be confined within Berlin's work and thought: both have been and continue to be discussed and debated in Sociology, Political Science, Law not to talk about Philosophy, although in each of these disciplines monism and pluralism have acquired particular implications and posed likewise particular intellectual challenges which seem, in many aspects, to diverge from those delineated by Berlin.

In the realm of Sociology, for example, pluralism is used to explain and define the relationships among smaller groups preserving their own cultural identities within a larger societal context (Hannerz: 1998). Also, there is an extensive number of sociological studies focused on religious pluralism which seems to characterize liberal democracies and the challenge which it is posing to the traditional way of conceiving the relationship between authority and religion, on the one hand, and individual consciousness and religion on the other. In Italy, the sociologist Luca Diotallevi, for example, has in fact devoted his attention in a series of writings to what he thinks is the changing relationship in the current Italian and European society among religious pluralism, modernity and secularization (Diotallevi: 2015; Pace-Giordan: 2014). While remaining within the realm of Sociology, we could conversely mention the so-called "sociological monism" which was, for example, theorized and supported by the sociologist, anthropologist and historian of religions Emile Durkheim, according to whom the relationships between individuals and society had to be conceived as those existing between man and God, i.e. between man and a monist superior entity. More precisely, in Durkheim's monist perspective, individuals received their values and behavioural codes, while internalizing them, from one and only the State, defined as the "politically and legally organized Nation" (Perelman 2005: 267-268).

In the case of Political Science, the concept of pluralism acquires even a different meaning: British Twentieth century political scientists such as, for example, Frederic Maitland and Harold Laski, stated that in liberal and democratic systems power should be dispersed among different groups, i.e. a plurality of organizations, groups, communities, with the purpose to combat the concentration of power into the hands of a single elite (Pasquino 2009).[12]

At the same time, in legal terms, we can observe that pluralism is sometimes related to the idea that within a territory marked by national boundaries there might be "more than one or legal system". More precisely, this kind of concept has represented a major topic of discussion for those scholars involved in analysing, for example, the complex relationship within colonized countries between indigenous legal orders and the "plurality of legal orders" introduced by European colonizers (Davis: 2012; Merry 1988: 869-879).

Moving to Philosophy, the term monism was used for the first time by the German Jusnaturalistic Philosopher Christian Wolff (1679-1754) who referred to a metaphisical vision bringing back all beings to a unique material or spiritual principle: pluralism, in his view, indicated exactly the opposite.[13] According, instead, to Raimon Panikkar, who has devoted his life to studying the problems of multiculturalism and inter-religious dialogue, in the present world pluralism has further changed – from a philosophical perspective – into "the true question about the human co-existence on the earth". In this sense, he thinks that nowadays the concept of pluralism is characterized by a strong "existential" implication (Panikkar 1995: 33-43).

Being conscious of the plurality of meanings and connotations which monism and pluralism have taken on, according to the areas of studies taken into account, now we want to focus on the aspects of Berlin's dichotomy between monism and pluralism which have pushed us to pose ourselves a series of questions. We wondered whether and to what extent Berlin's way of defining monism (in negative terms) and pluralism (in positive terms) could fit into the History of Political Thought and more precisely into the History of Political and Social Models: in other words, monism and pluralism, as they were conceptualized by Berlin in the late 50s and therefore during the Cold War, can be considered a good key of interpretation to be employed within the realm of the History of Political and Social Models? And, in relation to these questions, we posed further ones: in the History of Political and Social Models, does monism mean one and only a view of reality trying to find one, final universally valid model or theory which, politically speaking, ends up signifying the

---

[12] See also: the voice: "pluralism" in Encyclopedia Britannica available at www.britannica.com
[13] Berlin's definition of monism and pluralism itself has an undoubted philosophical connotation in the sense that – as we can read in in *Two Concepts of Liberty* – *both concepts* seem to refer in first instance to a certain way of conceiving and perceiving reality.

triumph of despotic and intolerant ideologies and regimes? Does pluralism mean one and only a view of reality recognizing plurality of ends and values and therefore that freedom of choice which, in Berlin's view, should characterize a truly liberal, evolved and tolerant kind of society and political systems? Don't we risk – if we confine ourselves to taking into account Berlin's definition – to loose part of the complexity of both concepts?

At the same time, like in our first book *Monisms and Pluralisms in the History of Political Thought* we wanted to avoid transforming our work in an exercise of mere "erudition". If, in fact, we move to present reality, we will notice how the words and concepts of monism and pluralism have powerfully consolidated over time, penetrating into our language through mass media, scholarly works, magazines etc. This collection of essays is indeed based on the consciousness of how important and relevant both terms and concepts are in the complex historical and political contexts in which we are living. While being aware of this and of the diversity of meanings and implications that monism and pluralism have in relation to the particular intellectual perspective used to analyse and discuss them, we wanted to give a personal contribution from our scholarly perspective to the ongoing discussion about these two concepts. In this sense, we sought to reflect on monism and pluralism focusing on their "concrete" dimension, i.e. in relation to specific historical and political problems, figures and projects and more precisely through the lens of the History of Political and Social models.

In other terms, in order to address the aforementioned questions, we did a precise and conscious methodological choice, i.e. we moved from a strictly theoretical level of analysis to the historical one where the concept of monism and pluralism become worth analysing from the perspective of the History of Political and Social models because of their impact on people and their life (social, political, moral). More precisely, the essays here collected delineate different social and political models – from the Antiquity to the 21st century – belonging to different historical frameworks, reflecting different political, social and philosophical views, responding to different, concrete problems and even to times of profound political and moral crisis.

Generally speaking, the essays can be divided into two main "groups" or "directions": 1. those posing the problem of the relationship between the rulers and the ruled people in terms of internal safety (social and political); 2. those posing the same problem in terms of freedom, although – as we can see – interesting lines of interconnections between the two groups do exist and are inevitable. It is not indeed our intention to cut the essays in two radically divergent groups; rather, we simply want to focus on what we think are the basic thematic lines characterizing them. On the basis of our research, we can also notice how the issue of internal safety tends to characterize those

social and political models having a substantially monist-oriented connotation whereas freedom tends to characterize those social and political models showing a substantially pluralist-oriented connotation. In this sense, chiefly the connection between pluralism and freedom might echo popular Berlin's definition of pluralism.

On the opposite, we think that this connection – although intriguing – is not so much consistent and that the analysis developed by the authors of the book allows to grasp how more nuanced the concepts of monism and pluralism become when related to the concrete historical dimension. With his definition establishing a direct relation between pluralism and negative liberty, Berlin defended the primacy of a liberal idea of freedom and he opposed it, during the 50s and the Cold war age, to totalitarian ideologies and more precisely to a precise and well-defined political and social system, i.e. Soviet Russia.

In our work, the connection between freedom and pluralism situates – instead – within political theories and more precisely political and social models which, in most cases, are far form being labelled as traditionally liberal and yet all defending and promoting the idea of social, political and value pluralism. Moreover, if it is true, according to the analysis developed in this work, that those theories addressing the problem of internal safety are characterized by a monist component, this does not necessary imply that they aim at rejecting any form of freedom or even destroying human dignity.

The interrelation between monism and despotic thought is true, for example, only for very few political thinkers and socio-political models here portrayed. In this sense, through our work, we sought to show two elements particularly relevant to us, because, in our opinion, capable of problematizing Berlin's definition of monism and pluralism: the "taken-for-granted" Berlin's dichotomy between pluralism as that philosophical, political, moral, view considered intrinsically positive, good, acceptable and noble on the one hand, and monism considered as that philosophical, political and moral, view intrinsically negative and dangerous, on the other hand, emerges from the essays here collected as extremely more nuanced, articulated and therefore less clear-cut. This does not depend only on the diversity of thinkers and the political and social visions taken into consideration, but also on the fact we moved within the historical dimension, because in each of the essay collected, the different political and social designs, theories, models and proposals discussed have been related to challenges, problems, inquiries and crisis historically defined and determined.

By reading the essays here collected, covering a wide range of authors and socio-political models: from Plutarch to Jacques Basnage, from David Mitrany to Francis Wright, from Aldo Capitini to Noam Chomsky, passing through

Ernest Duvergier de Hauranne, Luigi Sturzo and many others – all analysed and discussed with a focus to the historical and concrete dimension of their political reflections and proposals – we can notice how Berlin's definition of monism and pluralism show several limits. As previously observed, in many of the social and political models here proposed the concept of monism, i.e. the need of finding a theory, a model, a principle capable of explaining and positively reforming politics and society, seems in fact not be in total and open conflict with the value of liberty in the broadest sense of term. At the same time, in some of the intellectual figures delineated by the authors of the essays, we can identify a way of conceiving pluralism far from Berlin's liberal sensitivity.

That is the reason why, like for our first book *Monisms and Pluralisms in the History of Political Thought*, we opted for entitling our work *monisms and pluralisms* in the History of Political and Social Models. That "s" is put to stress how – when moving from a purely theoretical level to a more historical-political and social-political one – designating all-embracing and extremely general definitions in order to read and explain social and political reality is very difficult and problematic. In this sense, there is a continuity between our first book and the present one. The former and the latter share the same objective, i.e. to reflect through an historical perspective on the political implications of "diversified monisms" and "diversified pluralisms".

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Baum, B. and Nichols, R. (eds.), *Isaiah Berlin and the Politics of Freedom:"Two Concepts of Freedom" 50 Years Later*, Routledge, New York-London, 2013.

Berlin, I., *"The Hedgehog and the Fox"*, 1953, in Id., *Four Essays on Liberty*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1969.

— "Historical Inevitability", 1954, in Id., *Four Essays on Liberty*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1969.

— "Two Concepts of Liberty", 1958, in Id., *Four Essays on Liberty*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1969. We used the online version availabe at the website: http://spot.colorado.edu.

Campos Boralevi, L. and Quaglioni, D., *Politeia biblica*, Olschky, Firenze, 2013.

Carini, C., *Dottrine e istituzioni della rappresentanza (1789-1848)*, CET, Firenze, 1990.

Cherniss, J. L., *A Mind and its Time: the Development of Berlin's Political Thought*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2013.

Comparato, V. I. (ed.), *Modelli nella storia del pensiero politico. La rivoluzione francese e i modelli politici*, Biblioteca «Il Pensiero politico» vol. II, Olschky, Firenze, 1989.

— and Carini, C. (ed.), *Modelli nella storia del pensiero politico. Modelli di società tra '800 e '900*, Biblioteca «Il Pensiero politico», vol. III, Olschky, Firenze, 1993.

Crowder, G., *Liberalism and Value Pluralism*, Bloomsbury Publishing, London-Oxford, 2002.

— *Isaiah Berlin. Liberty and Pluralism*, Polity Press, Cambridge, 2004, .

Crowder, G. and Hardy, H. (eds.), *The One and the Many: Reading Isaiah Berlin, Prometheus Books*, Amherst, New York, 2006.

Davis, M., *Legal Pluralism in The Oxford Handbook of Empirical Research*, Crane, P. and Kritzer, H. M. (eds.), 2012, available at the web-site: http://www.oxfordhandbooks.com

Diotallevi, L., *L'ordine imperfetto. Stato, modernità, secolarizzazione*, Il Mulino, Bologna, 2015.

Dubnov, M., *Isaiah Berlin, the Journey of a Jewish Liberal*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2012.

Galipeau, C. J., *Isaiah Berlin's Liberalism*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1994.

Galstone, W. J., *Liberal Pluralism*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2002.

Giordan, G. and Pace, R. (eds.), *Religious Pluralism. Framing Religious Diversity in Contemporary World*, Springer International Publishing, New York, 2014.

Gray, J., *Isaiah Berlin: An Interpretation of his Thought*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, reprinted version, 2014.

Hannerz, U., *La complessità culturale*, trad. It, Il Mulino, Bologna, 1998.

Hardin, T., *Micheal Oaeshott's Cold War Liberalism*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2015.

Hausheer, R., *Introduction to I. Berlin, Against the Current: Essays in the History o Ideas*, Hardy, H. (ed.), Hogarth Press, London, 1979.

Ignatieff, M., *Isaiah Berlin: A Life*, London, Vintage, 2000.

Jahanbegloo, R. (ed.), *Conversations with Isaiah Berlin*, Scribner, Scribner, 1992.

Kelley, A., "Una visione complessa", Introduzione a I. Berlin, *Il riccio e la volpe*, Adelphi, Milano, 1986.

Lukes, S. (ed.), *Tra Filosofia e storia delle idee. La società pluralista e i suoi nemici. Intervista autobiografica e filosofica*, trad. it., Ponte Alle Grazie, Firenze, 1994.

Mastellone, S., "Holland as a Political Model in Italy in the 17th Century", «Bijdragen en Medelingen Betreffende de Geschiedenis der Nederlanden», 98, 1983: 568-582.

— *Storia del pensiero politico europeo. Dal XIX al XX secolo*, UTET, Torino, 1993.

— *Tre democrazie: sociale (Harvey), proletaria (Engels), europea (Mazzini)*, CET, Firenze, 2011.

Merry, S. E., "Legal Pluralism", «Law and Society Review», 5, 1988:869-896.

Mueller, J. W., "Fear and Freedom: on Cold War Liberalism", «European Journal of Political Theory», 7,1, 2008:45-64.

O'Sullivan, N., "Visions of Freedom: the Response to Totalitarianism", in Hayward, J., Barry, B., and Brown, A., *The British Study of Politics in the Twentieth Century*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1999.

Pasquino, G., *Nuovo corso di scienza politica*, Il Mulino, Bologna, 2009.

Pannikar, R., *Philosophical Pluralism and the Plurality of Religion in Religious Pluralism and Truth: Essays on Cross-Cultural Philosophy of Religion*, Dean, T. (ed.), State University of N. Y, New York, 1995.

Ricciardi, M., "L'altra libertà. Isaiah Berlin e il determinismo", «Biblioteca della Libertà», XLVI, 2011:1-23.