# Can Value-Pluralism Be Compatible with Perfectionism? An Assessment of J. Raz's Liberal Effort to Combine Them

**Leonidas Makris** ⓘ

Democritus University of Thrace, Komotini, Greece
Email: lmakris3@yahoo.com

## Abstract

Raz's robust perfectionist arguments follow a logical sequence permeating not only his overall liberal stance but also his position on value-pluralism. By situating a comprehensive understanding of value-pluralism and by highlighting its divergence from relativism and the prevalent in liberal theory "neutralist strand", the present text aims to reinforce the coherency of perfectionist arguments and their compatibility with liberalism. Notwithstanding the noted imperfections of Raz's incommensurability, the current article's exposition of his liberal thought as following a logical sequence to convey its perfectionism implicitly answers to neutralists construing the latter as simply lumping heterogeneous elements from diverse traditions. Raz's present interpretation, enriching where necessary his arguments in order to support a complex notion of value-pluralism, could ideally contribute to the strengthening of the currently marginal and underrated expression of liberalism in perfectionist terms.

## 1. Introduction

The current analysis of Raz aims to expound how a major feature of his liberal theory, i.e. value-pluralism, manifests itself in a perfectionist manner[1]. In ad-

---

[1]In contemporary political theory and philosophy there is a wide range of meanings attributed to "perfectionism", e.g. Haksar (1979), Rawls (1973), Finnis (1987), Gray (2000b), Wall (2008), Hurka (1993). The way the term is used here is similar to Wall's, in the sense that it does not specify the exact content of activities qualifying as perfectionist nor it dictates political authorities to maximise them. Promoting ideals of human flourishing need not entail promoting excellence. Therefore such perfectionism is compatible with the harm principle in advancing autonomy but in the way Raz interprets the notion of "harm" i.e. promoting both negative and positive duties in order for people not to be harmed (Raz, 1986). His perfectionism is clearly based on an account of the human good which informs his politics. Perfectionism here resembles also Hurka's one in the sense that it pursues as a worthwhile political aim (valuable) autonomous agency.

vancing my approach I will attempt to show that the popular liberal belief, seeing as incongruous the use of perfectionist means to convey pluralism, is mistaken in necessarily associating plurality with a neutral stance of political morality and institutions towards what is considered good in human life. While perfectionism rules out value nihilism and relativity, while it rejects the advocacy for a neutral stance of political morality, value-pluralism does not need to entail any of the above; it may aim to provide good incommensurable options; hence perfectionism need not be hostile to value plurality (Wall, 1998). The rationale behind developing this argument lies in the belief that the dominant perception of liberalism, as one closely related to neutrality, entails a certain political translation according to which the liberal state should not promote moral ideals. A state non-aligned among different perspectives of the good can be a minimal state, unable to regulate other power systems, such as the market, that invisibly establish prevailing perceptions of the good and engender inequalities. Such a neutral state unavoidably is conducive to the perpetuation of those inequalities, as it is not allowed to pursue social justice. Thus, supporting the compatibility between value-pluralism and perfectionism can offer legitimation to the ideal of a liberal state being charged with moral duties, generating, in this way, important implications for policy-making.

The definition of Raz's value-pluralism and its interpretation, which the present article begins, serves to distinguish it from value scepticism as well as to refute that it presupposes the doctrine of neutrality, thus paving the way to comprehend its perfectionist conception. The heterogeneity of value, Raz cogently argues, does not need to undermine its appeal as a moral objective. Valuable incommensurable options, a political objective for Raz, can be alternatives, not necessarily antagonistic. Since Raz does not systematically assemble all these ideas under a systematic liberal blueprint, in the second section of the article I will propound a guide for the consistency between Raz's incommensurability (a constituent element of value-pluralism) and his perfectionist account of political morality. Last, using this guide as a yardstick for his value-pluralism, the subsequent section will reveal the discrepancy between theoretical questions his account does not methodically tackle.

It should be clear that it is not my intention here to analyze Raz's value-pluralism in its entirety as a sui generis stream of thought. What Raz argues in his capacity as a value-pluralist will exclusively be examined by keeping in mind the manner in which it relates to the distinctive perfectionist way he perceives his liberal discourse. In a brief but comprehensive description of value-pluralism[2] Crowder defines it as the view that fundamental human values are irreducibly plural and "incommensurable", possibly conflicting between each

---

[2]Investigating the plurality of values dates back to Aristotle and to polymorphic perceptions of religious worship and of the world (Nussbaum, 1990). In modern times it is Berlin's systematic exposition of value-pluralism which paves the way for several contemporary thinkers to position themselves as value-pluralists. For a list of its adherents see Crowder, 2002: p. 17, n.2 and Kekes, 1993: p. 12.

other (Crowder, 2002). Observing this conflict, leading often to incompatibility of values, has led many to embrace such a plural account of the moral universe along Berlin's lines. In Berlin's world principal values are plural, conflicting, incommensurable; it is thus unreasonable to define philosophically a single, univocal summum bonum, let alone impose it politically (Galston, 2002). Yet, while Raz subscribes to this view he also retains his interest to promote manifold "bona" as a legitimate objective for liberalism. And it is this particular aspect of his thought that the current approach aims to investigate here.

## 2. Value-Pluralism and Incommensurability

Raz underlines the common incompatibility of values and options in his view of moral pluralism where various forms and styles of life exemplify different virtues and are incompatible. Using some easily recognized contrasts, Raz rightly claims that normally a person cannot lead a life both of action and contemplation nor can she possess all the virtues of a nun and a mother. Thus, "forms or styles of lives are incompatible if, given reasonable assumptions about human nature, they cannot normally be exemplified in the same life" (Raz, 1986: p. 395). Of course, there are diverse ways in which the effort for a rewarding life can be pursued. Various occupations or life-styles evoke different qualities and evolve varied features of people's personalities. It is possible that people due to distinctive abilities or disabilities may find fulfilment in a single activity. Most people, however, tend "to develop in different directions, to become different persons" (Raz, 1995: pp. 118-119). In his effort to delineate further value-pluralism Raz stresses that many available in our lives routes are both incompatible and valuable.

They are valuable in that each style of life, each pursuit is good and contributes to the well-being of the persons engaged in it. They are incompatible in that no person can combine all of them in one single life, as they call on different qualities and require the relative neglect or even suppression of other qualities which are good in themselves. It is this value multiplicity, this incomparability of much that is valuable, that I mean by value pluralism (Raz, 1995: p. 119).

These considerations help to clarify moral pluralism and to illuminate the principal value-pluralist claim, namely that many conflicting kinds of human flourishing exist and some cannot be compared in value. There may be good human lives neither better nor worse than one another, nor the same in worth, but incommensurably (differently) valuable (Gray, 2000a). It is incommensurability therefore that is the most distinctive component of value-pluralism. It refers to goods that may be radically different from one another, to values each of which makes its own distinctive claim and when compared with another cannot be subordinated to it in a hierarchy of values. No common denominator could measure them along the same dimension. In value-pluralism no basic value is inherently more important than any other and none embraces all other values (Crowder, 2002).

For Raz incommensurability broadly defined is "the absence of a common measure", used as "something of a philosophical term of art" in various topics and problems. When he considers in particular incommensurability of value, that is, the possibility that the goodness of two options is incommensurate (Raz, 1997: p. 110), he opts for a simple definition. They are "incommensurate if it is neither true that one is better than the other nor true that they are of equal value" (Raz, 1986: p. 322). Yet, there is some haziness in Raz about the relation between incommensurability and incomparability[3] if we are to compare the accounts offered in his respective works here. Thus, in the elaboration of his older account, he notes that incommensurability entails incomparability (Raz, 1986: p. 322). There and in other parts of the text (Raz, 1986: ch. 13) the two concepts are used as apparently synonymous. However, in his later explication he underlines that incommensurability should not to be confused with incomparability since the former does not imply the latter. Even if the values of items have no common measure they may be comparable in a variety of ways as it is with one more colourful or older painting of two whose value is incommensurate. He adds that the linguistic use of "incomparable" often indicates great superiority of one of the parts entailing their commensurability (Raz, 1997). Interestingly, while founding his comments on both texts, Sunstein criticises Raz for identifying the two terms. This is because even when he favours comparability between incommensurables, as in the latter text, Raz tends not to resort to reason(s) to justify it, something that for Sunstein does not qualify it as real comparability (Sunstein, 1997). It has to be acknowledged that, following the more recent account, the confusion between the two terms is not primarily a linguistic[4] one. Raz via his "basic preferences" (a form of weak reason) promotes some deliberation -not using the same value-scale but implying some kind of comparison[5], dedicated to choices among incommensurable values, choices that can matter greatly for people's lives (Raz, 1999). Still, Raz undoubtedly rejects the particular kind of comparability which tries to assimilate different kinds of values fitting them in a common procrustean measuring logic.

Raz's value-pluralism has to be distinguished from pluralism as widely used i.e. as a stance which tolerates different conceptions of the good regardless of their moral value. In comparison to simple plurality, Raz's value-pluralism "marks a different and competing idea" representing the view that there are several varied and incompatible valuable ways of life (Raz, 1995: p. 118). He attributes to it traits found in Crowder's account where value-pluralism is distinguished from a mere plurality of belief. The latter is the unelaborated mean-

---

[3]See also section C.

[4]Raz sometimes uses different terms interchangeably to signify the same meaning, like he does with the words "incommensurable" and "incommensurate". To "alleviate monotony" he uses "incomparable" as a "stylistic variant" of "incommensurable" (Raz, 1997). As I will show, by not distinguishing them Raz makes an unfortunate choice implicating two important for his theory notions (incommensurability-incomparability) with a distinct normative significance.

[5]See also section C where the comparison Raz allows between incommensurable options is explained in more detail.

ing usually ascribed to "pluralism" in contemporary political theory, namely the idea that different (groups of) people believe different things (Crowder, 2002). Razian value-pluralism is neither an empirical claim about the nature of current belief nor an interpretation of pluralism supposedly found in late modern societies (Gray, 2000a) but part of a suggested exposition of the structure of the normative universe (Galston, 2002).

Raz argues for the promotion of ideals of life (active and reflective living, containing admirable qualities like friendship) and goods despite believing that they can indeed be realized with different life-styles. Nevertheless, honouring the multiformity of value has seemingly immediate repercussions on his pursue of human flourishing. For if active and contemplative lives display distinctive virtues but are also incompatible, complete moral perfection becomes unattainable. There are always virtues eluding people because they are available only to those who pursue alternative and incompatible forms of life (Raz, 1986). But despite acknowledging the fact that there is no specified as such best or maximal form of human life, Raz still targets the best human flourishing coming in many varieties some of which cannot be combined (Gray, 2000a). Promoting good life, even attempting to maximize it, remains central in Raz as he celebrates the variation of its form that value-pluralism provides.

A form of life is maximal if…a person whose life is of that kind cannot improve it by acquiring additional virtues, nor by enhancing the degree to which he possesses any virtue without sacrificing another virtue he possesses or the degree to which it is present in his life. Belief in value-pluralism is the belief that there are several maximal forms of life (Raz, 1986: p. 396).

The assertion that good can harbour conflicts of value does not mean that it is futile to aim at it. It simply connotes the diversity of lives in which humans may thrive. The heterogeneity of good does not undermine its appeal as a moral objective. Available options can be very different between them, making it impossible to compare their worth. But they need not be antagonistic, they can be alternatives. The choice among thriving or good lives we sometimes face need not be a 'tragic' one. It does not necessarily entail a traumatic uncertainty or inconclusiveness; it may simply bespeak the abundant number of flourishing lives open to us (Gray, 2000a).

## 3. Value-Pluralism: Neither Relativism Nor Neutrality[6]

An assortment of arguments link incommensurability of forms of life and value-pluralism -and for that matter Raz's position, with a partial or complete inability to make value judgements; they thus assimilate them to a flattening equality of views about the good. The line of reasoning conflating incommensurability with relativism stems from very diverse backgrounds. A principal source for such views could be postmodernism insisting on multiplicity of ethical perspec-

---

[6]The present arguments refer *only* to the strand of thought supporting neutrality as part of the inference that we are unable to make politically reliable judgments about the good in life. There are other strands of neutrality which derive their conclusions from different premises (see Raz, 2002).

tives as much as to ignore coherence. So far as someone could be a consistent representative of such current of thought it is Lyotard's work that sums up well this scepticism about objective truth. He sees as only partial and relative the various narratives of value, among which no one is privileged and all are of fundamentally equivalent weight (Lyotard, 1984). Arguments relating incommensurable values with relativity can come from a conservative source too as some of Kekes' contentions suggest (Kekes, 1993; 1998). They regard highly cultural traditions making them the main guide for the resolution of choices among plural and incommensurable values. But local tradition, despite its prominence, cannot be exhaustive in resolving such choices or acting as an exclusive and ultimate judge in ethics. Pluralism of value has to be discerned from such relativism. For example, cultural membership as such is a necessary but not sufficient condition for autonomy, since not all cultures value autonomy (Crowder, 2002). If one can intelligibly claim to be speaking from a consistent and solid (not context dependent) liberal standpoint, as Raz does, there must be something more than culture dependence to legitimate his affirmation. To affirm that being a comprehensive supporter of liberty is something good, it is necessary to have some faith in value universality as a concomitant of value intelligibility, that is, of the possibility to explain and understand what is good about any good-making property. "To that extent the universality of values is an essential feature of all values, part of what it is to be a good-making property" (Raz, 2001: p. 42).

While explaining the differences between value-pluralism and postmodernism[7] in particular (Crowder & Griffiths, 1999) is not of crucial relevance here, it is more inviting for my purpose to investigate how some liberals, opposing Razian plurality, are lured by what Crowder calls the "argument from indeterminacy". Such argument postulates that if values are plural and incommensurable the same applies to ways of life. Thus it is implausible to rationally determinate conceptions of the good life, with many of them becoming equally legitimate. Government action to promote a particular conception of the good appears unreasonable and consequently individuals should remain "unrestrained" in deciding how to live. Therefore, due to moral indeterminacy, value-pluralism entails a liberal doctrine of limited government or state neutrality (Crowder, 2002). There is a distinctive neutralist defence of liberal ideas claiming that since no particular way or ways of life can be proved to be better than any other, liberalism should be justified precisely with the condition of not aiming to promote any specific one of them. Galston takes this stance to be one of the main rationales contrived to justify the neutrality thesis. He interprets this version of neutrality as negating rational choosing among ways of life and as viewing assertions about the good as personal and incorrigible. State neutrality comes as a desirable

---

[7]One of the most striking differences between the two continues to be the overall rejection on the part of postmodernism of any universality of values.

[8]Neutral liberalism is not as homogeneous in its expression as often assumed and it should not necessarily be identified with relativism or scepticism about the good (Mulhall & Swift, 1996); Barry is an example, among others, of a neutralist overtly rejecting the charge of relativism (Barry, 1995; 2002).

and reasonable response in such exposition (Galston, 2002)[8].

On the contrary, Raz distinguishes incommensurability from indeterminacy and incompleteness in options or from their rough equality (Gray, 2002). Thus, Raz's value-pluralism approximates ethical theories which affirm the possibility of moral knowledge distancing itself from ethical scepticism, subjectivism or relativism. It allows rejecting judgements about the good as being in error (Gray, 2000a). Discerned from sweeping relativism it follows ordinary experience in suggesting a non-arbitrary distinction between good and bad (Galston, 2002). It is committed to the view that incompatible but decent and worthwhile life-routes are available across different civilizations and generations (Raz, 2003). Gray asserts that value-pluralism accepts the truth of certain moral beliefs about the world. While often confused with such doctrines, incommensurability of values is not a version of relativism, subjectivism or moral scepticism. It is a species of what Gray calls "objective pluralism" (Gray, 2002). Evaluating Raz's pluralist argument Green too distinguishes it from moral scepticism which cannot comprise a liberal doctrine. A liberal political morality takes morality seriously and makes moral recommendations. No doubt many liberals, including neutralists (e.g. R. Dworkin), do take morality seriously. But this should not be conflated necessarily with the renunciation of value-pluralism. Rejecting scepticism does not require monism, one uniquely right way to lead life. Raz correctly underlines the plurality of worthwhile ways of life and the need to make available and promote choices among them in the name of autonomy (Green, 1988).

As Raz concedes pluralism may run the risk of affirming contradictory values by corroborating the value of different cultures; one can yield the conclusion that something is good and another see the very same thing as bad (Raz, 2003). But there are cross-cultural limits that Raz supports, set by common human needs shaping the conditions under which humans can flourish. Several times in history ways of life have crossed these limits (Hampshire, 1983). The indisputable need of a reasonable value-pluralist to mark these limits and criticize their violation has to be combined in a meaningful way with his respect for value diversity. Raz wonders if plurality can be respected by keeping our critical ability to condemn, popular or not, evaluative beliefs, regardless of their rootedness in some culture or other (Raz, 2003). His answer to the question if one can combine the two, that is if one can affirm value diversity without contradiction and without resorting to relativity, is trenchant and significant for my objectives here. According to Raz relativism by confining the validity of values to particular times and places ventures acceptance of any value supported by the practices of a society. It does not have the resources to criticize the evaluative beliefs of other societies. Raz's social dependence thesis avoids this pitfall.

While Raz is seriously involved in revealing the importance of the social dependence of value (Raz, 2003), at the same time he is also very keen to reconcile it with its universality. "Belief in the universality of value is vital for a hopeful perspective for the future. Yet, it is a perspective which allows for diversity within that universality" (Raz, 2001: p.3). By underlining his view that the two

can be combined Raz intends to dispel the worries that his value-pluralism falls apart in decay as a species of cultural relativism. He means to bypass relativistic limitations in the scope of evaluative assessment, potentially stemming from social dependence, by contriving values avoiding such social reliance and existing independently of his "special dependence thesis" (Raz, 2003). Wallace compiles these Razian values which include sensual and perceptual pleasures, the aesthetic values of natural phenomena, as well as "enabling moral values" like Raz's freedom and the value of people. These values are to some degree independent of particular historic and social conditions; "we can straightforwardly apply them to make value judgements in a way that is unconstrained by historical and social contingency" (Wallace, 2003: p. 3).

It needs to be noted here that his claim of universality refers more to liberty in its abstract form and less to his specifically contrived concept of autonomy. For Raz the duty of respecting people and their freedom is indeed of universal validity, "arising out of the fact that people are of value in themselves" but it "derives its concrete manifestations from social practices". In short, for him the foundational moral values are universally valid in abstract form but they become accessible to us in ways which are socially dependent" (Raz, 2001: p. 8).

Summing up Raz's arguments which combine his perfectionist orientation with the multiple expression of value, we can recall the universal basis of his "enabling" freedom, the importance of choice between incommensurables, the condition of including solely worthwhile options in his pluralism. These positions support his attempted fusion between partiality (social dependence), diversity and objectivity of values by resisting relativism and affirming the possibility of knowledge of the good within a liberal framework. While I acknowledge the complexity of the debate on the universality and objectivity of values (Raz, 1999: pp. 118-160), the presence of universal and somehow objective patterns of value is necessary. As Raz confirms, it is "a condition of the possibility or perhaps of the conceivability of knowledge, and a condition for the applicability of the notions of mistaken or correct (true) thoughts" (Raz, 1999: p. 120). Raz fulfils these conditions to the extent he coherently holds that the truth of value propositions does not depend on social facts. Gardbaum emphasizes that the truth of a rationally superior to others way of life does not suffice to endow it with self-executing political legitimacy if there is no agreement on its superiority; pluralism alone, without confirming its truth, requires neutrality; the absence of agreement on truth, and not of truth itself, is the crucial factor from the perspective of politics. Any stipulation challenging the intelligibility of normative claims can exclude from the political realm calls for the superiority of particular conceptions of the good. As Gardbaum argues, to be consistent to his underlying ethical theory as a liberal proponent of political perfectionism, Raz would have to demonstrate that at least some conflicts related to his value-pluralism and concerning conceptions of the good are rationally resolvable. In that event, he could potentially show that his particular species of pluralism is superior to its rivals, like he would need to have done without the incommensurability argu-

ment (Gardbaum, 1991).

## 4. A Guide for the Consistency between Incommensurability and Perfection

I will use Gardbaum's logic here as a yardstick to measure the consistency between Raz's incommensurability[9] and his perfectionism. To include the substantive debate on the superiority of specific conceptions as part of the political discourse entails providing evidence that not all conflicts among moral ideals are incommensurable. The argumentation here intends to demonstrate that the concept of incommensurability per se implicates that not all comprehensive moral conflicts are insurmountable ones. This would entail that neutrality does not necessarily follow from incommensurability since the claim for the former, as purported by some of its advocates, denies this line of argumentation. Unlike relativism and subjectivism incommensurability ensures the reality of moral conflict. The fact that reasonable people can disagree on their claims suggests a genuine plurality of moral ideals which means that values are not necessarily consistent with each other (Gardbaum, 1991). Expressing values or ideals which cannot be all realised simultaneously or during a person's life-time reveals a kind of incommensurability that "does not undermine the objectivity of evaluative thought. It merely leads to value-pluralism" (Raz, 1999: p. 159).

On the other hand, by claiming exclusive locality for truths, relativism dissolves genuine moral conflict. Raz could be interpreted as purporting something similar when he claims that "many culture-specific concepts, concepts which evolved in one culture…have no parallels in others". But he reassures us that "they are embedded in a conceptual framework which includes many concepts bridging the cultural gap, or which have at least near relatives in other cultures", something that permits their evaluative judgement. "There are no human cultural islands which cannot be understood by anyone other than their members" (Raz, 1999: p. 158). As opposed to this, in relativism seemingly opposing principles do not actually conflict since no individual truth can apply across its own moral boundary. Moral conflicts occur only if more than one jurisdiction and set of rules hold for an issue, and relativism disallows such overlapping jurisdictions (Gardbaum, 1991).

Incommensurability therefore should not be equated to relativism but to the claim that no common currency ranks the existing values. It suggests that rational people affirm a plurality of values, avowing that there is no one rationally compelling way of life. The possibility of genuine moral conflict is confirmed by rationalist means implying that some ways of life are superior to others. They are reasonable people the ones who could disagree on incommensurable values suggesting that some of the conceptions can be relatively unreasonable. This is cer-

---

[9]While I embrace Gardbaum's conclusion on the possible co-existence between incommensurability and perfectionism I disagree with his intimation that this would undermine the coherence of the former (Gardbaum, 1991: p. 1360). Incommensurability does not necessarily imply complete incomparability as he assumes (Mason, 2006).

tainly not analogous to the claim that any such conception is as good as any other or that rational people cannot agree that some conceptions are better than others. If reason is the standard identifying incommensurable values some values must be irrational (Gardbaum, 1991)[10]. Incommensurability grounds the reality of moral conflict (which subjectivism and relativism dispute) by appealing to reasons that support not one rational outcome but particular moral conceptions of the good life. Therefore it is possible to say that one way of life is rationally superior to another, otherwise the incommensurability thesis does not overcome relativism's challenge. "But this is all the proponent of perfectionism needs", in this case Joseph Raz, "not to be ruled out in principle, to be able to reach the merits of [his] case". It is exactly the "state of affairs…all neutralist arguments aim to prevent". From this it follows that "the incommensurability thesis cannot provide a coherent grounding for neutrality" (Gardbaum, 1991: p. 1360).

In principle, Raz seems to agree with this rationale when in spite of designating the social dependence of the form of values he heightens also the independence of their goodness. "We learn that not all goods are socially created…by examining the nature of the various goods". "[E]ven if all goods are socially created (and they are not), it does not follow that the explanation of…what makes them good consists in an appeal to the fact that the relevant social practices exist". The explanation "must consist in pointing to good-making properties…" (Raz, 1999: p. 154)

Gardbaum's thoughts on the possibility of combining incommensurability and perfectionism set the threshold Raz needs to surpass if his notion of value-pluralism is to have any compatibility with his concept of liberal perfectionism. If this is to be the case, he needs to provide a notion of incommensurability roughly fulfilling at least three basic conditions: A. while allowing moral conflicts, the values from which they stem we are unable to classify hierarchically, it should sometimes permit some kind of comparability between them in order to retain the aim of goodness as something intelligible and not relativistic. B. when this comparability is allowed, Raz has to concede that it follows some rational basis that allows reasonable choices: Reason seems to be a necessary axiological element for any liberal theory that does not want to be ultimately relativistic. C. while it reveals the social, historical, cultural, circumstantial and temporal dependency of goods and values which shape their conflict, at the same time it should permit that some values[11] have to be 'more objective or universal' in nature and more suitable than others in a particular application. After all, as one of the founders of the incommensurability thesis claims, incommensurable values and theories may have an element of common reference making it possible to generally compare them (Kuhn, 1996)[12].

---

[10]The expressions in italics are all emphasised by Gardbaum.

[11]For a liberal like Raz some version of freedom should figure among these values.

[12]This is while direct, hierarchical and cardinally ranked (precisely ranked by some unit) evaluation of one theory or value over another is, under the incommensurability thesis, unattainable (Kuhn, 1996).

In practice, Raz's incommensurability -in terms of allowing rational choice between plural values, needs to be situated somewhere between Berlin's (one that tends not to allow such choice) and that of several value-pluralists[13] that allows choice but without explicitly permitting rationality to govern it. It also needs to fit in a value-pluralism that permits his liberal perfectionism to take the precedence as a normative ethical and political ideal, that is, in value-pluralism like Williams describes it, i.e. as a thesis about values, not itself a political or ethical ideal (Williams, 2003). Up to this point I presented some elements in Raz's thought that are compatible with the incommensurability that I just sketched. It is time to examine other components in his work whose compatibility with it is either dubious or that are clearly uncongenial with such concept.

## 5. Questions about the Consistency between Value-Pluralism and Liberal Perfectionism in Raz

As Farneti notes, Raz tries to designate people's universal capacity to attach to valuable things as the basis for setting up a theory of the normativity of reason which may accommodate diverse judgements about value (Farneti, 2006). Admittedly, it is not an easy exercise the one Raz intends to solve in, among other texts, Value, Respect and Attachment (Raz, 2001), namely to reconcile the historicity and the universality of value. His attempted solution to harmonize them though cannot guarantee results of objectivity while it approximates a mere tautology. Thus, as offered below, Raz's solution is no more reliable[14] than the one Kripke (1982) traces in 'Wittgenstein's paradox' by underlining the communally apprehensible aspect of the language games as the focal point of their truth and intelligibility: "Values have to be universal to be intelligible, for the explanation of why something is a value or has a value is…in terms of its general properties". For differences of space and time cannot help to explain "why a value can be instantiated here and not there, now and not later" and define its distinctiveness. "Such explanations would leave the difference between…two instances [of value] entirely unintelligible. So, the intelligibility of value entails its universality". Raz does struggle to demonstrate that his thesis on universality of value is compatible with the historicity of value. As himself puts it, "I do not claim that all values emerge in time, but many seem to me to be historic creations, and I tried to show how that is compatible with their universality" (Raz, 2006: pp. 80-81). Leaving aside the universality of the basis of freedom as an enabling value that Raz explicitly defends, it is doubtful if Raz complies successfully here with my third condition[15] of compatibility for his incommensurability. A universality that

---

[13]For theorists using roughly such strategy (e.g. "practical wisdom") and for its complications see Mason (2006).

[14]For Raz the development of common or translated linguistic codes is one of the means of shared apprehension and communication, of the cross-cultural practices through which the inherent intelligibility of values and morality spreads. Habituation, history, travel, writing, human imagination, etc can also form "bridges" of universality for otherwise 'localized' values (Raz, 1999: pp. 157, 181).

[15]For the conditions assessing the compatibility of incommensurability and perfection in Raz, always refer to p.12.

is exhausted in the intelligibility of values might be insufficient to support his perfectionist liberal claims.

Raz's value-pluralism and the additional effort he puts to escape from accusations of relativism appear similar to Berlin's. Berlin too goes to significant lengths to distinguish his version of value-pluralism from moral relativism (Robinette, 2007), partly by arguing that some values or moral principles are universal in scope, among them negative liberty (Berlin, 2002). However, he is less clear whether the priority of negative liberty, which he takes to be the core of liberal morality, is a principle that has universal application (Crowder, 2003). Similarly Raz recognises that some moral requirements, including requirements about freedom, are universal in scope (e.g. 2001); yet he also suggests that the value of autonomy, which he regards as the core expression of liberal morality today, is not universal in this way. Nevertheless, we can claim that Berlin remains a liberal because he maintains that preserving a certain minimum of individual liberty is a primary political priority. While his liberty is not the sole social good, not always outdoing other values, ethical pluralism furnishes it with special importance since to pursue genuine values people should be free (Cherniss & Hardy, 2008). At the same time, however, Berlin seems to deduce the value of liberty from the conflicts of other values. He advances his concept of negative liberty as one enabling people to choose among conflicting goods and evils of incompossible value (Gray, 2000a). Gray seems to be right that, under value-pluralism, the same applies to Raz's proposed autonomy which cannot be privileged in comparison to other values. It appears difficult to accord to its priority if value-pluralism is true. Autonomy is not a static conception among turning rival values. The way to advance it is controversial due to our divergent, according to value-pluralism, views of the good (Gray, 2000a). After all, although a detailed and well structured proposal for the form of freedom in contemporary liberal societies, as Raz concedes, his autonomy is not "a universal ethical ideal. It is an ethical ideal for it is necessary for a successful life in contemporary post-industrial societies" (Raz, 2006: p. 79). In other words, as Gray implies, while both Berlin and Raz acknowledge that morality makes universal demands, neither asserts clearly that distinctively liberal values are among these demands[16].

Once more the problem here lies in the type of incommensurability Berlin and Raz use. Berlin often interprets it radically, as synonymous with incomparability. This raises the question on how we can rationally make choices between values when there is no unified system of measurement that can make such deliberations (Cherniss & Hardy, 2008). While Raz appears keener to favour an incommensurability admitting the promotion of the choice of goods in his pluralism as well as taking seriously the choice between them, along with Berlin he does not

---

[16]We should not extrapolate from this that they are less committed liberals. "Contra John Gray [particularly 1995], [this does not] mean that [their] pluralism is incompatible with, or necessary undermines, [their] liberalism" (Cherniss & Hardy, 2008). As shown below, *mutatis mutandis*, Raz's plurality and his perfectionist liberalism can converge significantly and quite consistently.

[17]This is if Raz's incommensurability is to be consistent with the perfectionist version of his liberalism.

explain adequately the non-quantitative or rule-based account of practical, situational reasoning that presumably[17] lies behind it. Like Berlin, he does not offer a methodical explanation of the nature of non-systematic reason needed to accompany his incommensurability to make it a meaningful part of his theory. When applied to Raz's liberalism this fact can imply confusion, related to my first and third conditions of consistency, about the sort of liberty he stands for. Raz doesn't do much to clarify the connection between his universal "enabling" liberty and his more comprehensive "local" autonomy. As a perfectionist liberal[18] he should have defended more extensively the comparative advantages of his type of liberty that make it "valuable" in his eyes (condition A). This also poses a problem for the kind of perfectionism he defends, in the sense that it lacks weight in its legitimising objectivity as a species of a liberal ideal (condition C). Still, there is an advantage in the underlying premises of Raz's liberalism in comparison to Berlin's, rendering the former less vulnerable to relativism.

We have to remember that for Raz "value-pluralism is the view that many different activities and forms of life which are incompatible are valuable" (Raz, 1995: p. 179, emphasis added). While Raz handling of it permits different readings of the link between his incommensurability and his perfectionist liberalism, it suffices to distinguish him from Berlin who does not orientate towards value[19] the agent facing alternatives (Robinette, 2007). Raz purports showing that well-being is an objective issue, not merely a function of individual or cultural belief. We can know the ways of life conducing better to well-being; namely those we have good reasons to accept as beneficial (Crowder, 2002). It is Raz's commitment against a neutral stance towards goodness that here can be read as implicitly accentuating a certain universal in scope aspect of value, that is, in its abstract, not in its applicable, form (Raz, 2001). "Once a value comes into being, it bears on everything without restriction" (Raz, 2003: p. 22). And this comes from his intention not to avoid cross-cultural/social estimations of value while, at the same time, being cautious to avoid the imposition of his choice by respecting basic human features. Thus, his social dependency of (only) the precise formation of value prevails when he finds inappropriate the generalized application (or the enforcement) of liberal values since they were formed in certain societies and apply better in the advanced capitalist ones. Nonetheless, this does not lead him to abstain from moral value-judgements criticizing practices in illiberal societies, such as "the repression of gays…, racial discrimination or female circumcision" which he sees as "morally abhorrent". It is more the "moral" (the more abstract) than the "political" (the more practical) aspect that carries

---

[17]Crowder (2002, 2004) and Galston (2002, 2004) are other perfectionist liberals who more systematically sought to reconcile pluralism and liberalism. This implicated modifications to both liberalism and pluralism but, as Cherniss and Hardy (2008) assert, such alterations are "justifiable" and "inherently desirable". The current effort to reconcile Raz's value-pluralism with his perfectionist view of liberalism involves a similar process.

[19]Berlin is less than Raz committed to the objectivity of goodness. Thus, he offers "no clear guidance about how to choose among options" apart from "the avoidance of human suffering". And "Berlin is aware that this is not particularly exciting" for a political theory (Robinette, 2007: p. 345).

the seeds of, an otherwise underdeveloped, universality in his value-judgements about what he does not see as good. "We tend to regard values or principles whose application is not restricted to favourable social, cultural, or economic conditions as moral than political". In its practical implications the dependency of value unveils political principles and institutions contingently appropriate to concrete conditions of societies (Raz, 2003: pp. 152-153).

But Raz also holds that this contingency of value "is in principle consistent with thinking that liberal principles and institutions…are superior to all rival political principles and institutions" (Raz, 2003: p. 153). Doesn't it follow that if liberal schemes are beneficial only under certain liberal conditions, we should bring about such conditions? Sharing his answer with Williams (2003), Raz thinks we shouldn't because the human need to live under culture, does not necessarily "translate" into a need to live under the specific cultural form of liberal modernity (Raz, 2003). By fostering more his value-pluralism here, Raz highlights the dependency of the particular formation of value on contexts; he discloses its multiplicity and resists its enforced unanimous fabrication or imposition according to a single dominant cultural model. Adding this pluralist feature to his above remark on liberal principles and institutions, the core of which -irrespective of the contingency of their application, he perceives as transcending locality and partiality, one could put together a differentiating feature of Raz's pluralist liberalism. Yes, his autonomy is a particular "political" expression of liberty suitable and proposed for a certain type of society where it can maximize the good. But its underlining basis, the "enabling and facilitating" value of freedom is one of his values non-dependent on social practices (Dancy, 2005). And this, along with the normative guidance his perfectionism offers, is probably enough for his liberal thesis to avoid a self-defeating relativism. Razian freedom is an "enabling value" because it allows people to have a life i.e. "to act pursuing various valuable objectives of their choice" (Raz, 2003: p. 34, emphasis added). According to this reading his liberalism is implicitly presented as somehow having an advantageous relationship with the realization of value.

If we follow this interpretation of Raz, it seems that his freedom, or autonomy as its particular formation for contemporary societies, is indeed in a privileged position to promote value. Under this interpretation, while autonomy is an essential part of good life, it does not seem to be so much a substantive form of life in competition with the rest, but rather a manner to approach various ways of living (Crowder, 2002). For Raz (1986) valuing freedom (as autonomy) implies an adequate range of valuable options to choose from, that is, it presupposes a conception of moral and value pluralism. Raz links value-pluralism and autonomy accentuating that the importance of this relation consists in both pluralism and autonomy involving the creation of value (Crowder, 2002). But the argument here too seems to be incomplete due to the underdeveloped supporting evidence. When Raz implies that his version of pluralism is "weak", implicating solely various conflicting considerations which permit choices involving trade-offs (Raz, 1986), not the strong Berlinian value-pluralism (Crowder, 2003),

in theory there is no tension between his liberalism and his pluralism. Nonetheless, he never embedded clearly in his theory the necessary notion of incommensurability for their coherent connection; and this is apart from the fact that Raz suggests that by "assuming the value of autonomy one can prove strong pluralism" too (Raz, 1986: p. 398). Despite the largely unspecified "weakness" of it, Raz after all aspires to adhere to a genuine notion of value-pluralism involving some kind of incommensurability. And while the creation of value is embedded in Raz's autonomy, it remains blurred what kind of incommensurability this creation of value implies in order to accommodate his plurality (Crowder, 2002).

As Crowder suggests Raz never addresses this question adequately. There is no clear link between the way he construes his conception of incommensurability (Raz, 1997) and his perfectionism. On the one hand the conditions (A and C)[20] I posed for a compatible with his perfection incommensurability are once more not consistently met. On the other, unorthodoxically, when the issue at stake is the nature of value, Raz's epistemology as viewed here does not remain neutral between ideas of the good, with liberty as autonomy, not justice or equality for instance, bearing a privileged relation with them. Despite his commitment to incommensurability Raz's epistemology seems to be promoting lives which, according to him, favor, all things considered, the quality of value. And one of his favorite ways to live is certainly the liberal one. Raz indeed seems to promote as feasible the choice, unclear if it is the necessary reasoned choice[21], between incommensurable options.

Attributing to Raz a strong incommensurability would be challenged by his view on the choice between incommensurate values. To the extent that the choice is justified as the outcome of subtle, indirect and incidental differences of value or goodness linked with the circumstances of the chooser's life, we can infer that his perfectionism takes preference over his commitment to incommensurability. Even though two goods are incommensurable[22] Raz may recommend pondering at length the option between them. It matters greatly which to opt for and it is reasonable to deliberate about the choice (Raz, 1986: pp. 332-335). It is anticipated that a decision making such a qualitative difference for a life needs serious contemplation before taken (Regan, 1997). But this, according to Regan, discards Raz's incommensurability since it presumes value-comparisons. Here the criticism against Raz's choice between incommensurables as unintelligible[23] comes from Regan who believes in the complete comparability of values (Regan, 1997).

Raz's way of choosing could also face considerable disapproval from a plural-

---

[20]See p.15.

[21]Mason (2006) argues that Raz favours weak reasoned choices among incommensurable options. A coherently reasoned choice could connect Raz's incommensurability and his perfectionism. See my second condition for a potentially consistent Razian incommensurability (p.15).

[22]Raz's examples here are a successful life as a clarinettist and as a lawyer.

[23]Raz's choice between incommensurables is considered unintelligible because it necessarily implies reasons supporting it, making thus the values commensurate in the first place. Yet, several value-pluralists who combine incommensurability with rational choice refute Regan's remarks (Mason, 2006).

ist's point of view. Aiming at the intelligibility of choice between incommensurables, as Raz does, can contribute to a weaker form of incommensurability which would be more consistent with his perfectionist liberalism, for it permits more flexibility in pursuing a good life supported by choice. Nevertheless, the way he defends this position is unconventional, to say the least, from a value-pluralist point of view. He does not underpin his decision to clarify the choice between incommensurables with an account distinguishing incommensurability from incomparability to make the former compatible with a form of rational comparability. Raz has often used "incommensurability" as synonymous with "incomparability", something that should not necessarily be the case. As Chang's examples of economic and measurement theory indicate, the lack of a single scale of units of value, i.e. incommensurability, does not entail incomparability. To compare things we do not need to measure them precisely; "one alternative can be morally better than another without being better by 2.34 units". Insisting that "comparable items can be ordinally ranked, ranked on a list, and need not be cardinally ranked, precisely ranked by some unit of value", Chang concludes that incommensurability and incomparability are distinct (Chang, 1997: pp. 1-2). Thus, incommensurability does not rule out rational comparison of options. This is verified, among others[24], by Pildes and Anderson (1990) who argue that choices among incommensurable values can still be rationally appraised. Raz could have used such an inclusive notion of incommensurability permitting him to match it easier with his perfectionist account by revealing the ad hoc comparable advantages of his liberalism in contributing to the worth of lives. This strategy is not at all uncommon by value-pluralists who often assert heterogeneity without repudiating some ranking (Galston, 2002). Ranking incommensurable options by measuring their relevance to goodness permits pluralists to make comparisons between these options according to a super-scale that, as they argue, bypasses the super value[25] of a sophisticated monism. Such super-scale could be the "worth to one's life" (Griffin, 1986; 1997) or "goodness" as the 'higher-level synthesizing category', with lower goods being constitutive means to the good (Stocker, 1990: p. 72). It could also be a "covering value" that has plural values as its parts but transcends the value and the circumstances of the choice itself by considering the relevant external conditions which might determine what matters in choosing (Chang, 1997; 2004).

Leaving aside the possible criticism that such approaches could be subject to[26], Raz's perfectionism would have been reconciled better with their incommensurability implicating rational choice (my condition B). If and when he allows comparison between incommensurables, he is precisely criticized for not resorting to reason at all (in his earlier writings) or relying only to a "weaker reason"

---

[24]E.g. Heuer (2004: pp. 141-144) who explains why Raz's incommensurability needed a more extensive rational comparison of options.

[25]A "monistic" super value is according to these value pluralists a feature that the options have in common.

[26]For criticisms to approaches of incommensurability allowing rational comparisons between options see Mason (2006, section 4).

(latter texts). Thus, in the former he often identifies incommensurability with incomparability (Raz, 1986, ch.13), he claims that "in the choice between incommensurate options reason is unable to provide any guidance" and that often incommensurability "mark[s] the inability of reason to guide our choice" (Raz, 1986: p. 334, n.1). Later on, he is less stringent on the involvement of rationality in such choices arguing that they implicate not so much reason as whims (Raz, 1997: p. 127). In even more recent writings (Raz, 1999), when Raz faces incommensurate options he appeals to "basic preferences" that according to Mason (2006) implicate reason only in a weak sense[27]. Criticizing Raz for exactly not using, or using too little, reason when facing choices among incommensurable options, Sunstein is another value-pluralist emphasizing the common presence of rational judgements in assessing choices of this kind. They are present in the "extrinsic grounds" or the "expressive considerations"[28] linked to the actual choice of the incommensurables or even, in the face of incommensurability, when judgements on worth are feasible[29] (Sunstein, 1997). Sunstein's rationale, not requiring commensurability for choice, diverges from Raz's stance on the issue. "It is odd and unnecessary to say", as Raz (1986: p. 327) says, "that a unitary metric necessarily "lies behind"…all (rational or irrational) choices" (Sunstein, 1997: p. 241). Again, if Raz were to follow Sunstein's rational choice between diversified options, his incommensurability, complying with my second condition, would fare in a "weaker" sense than it actually does.

In any case, the way Raz relates his classical conception of human agency to reasons for action and choices is not always easily decipherable (Stocker, 2004). The problem described in this section (summarized in my three potentially bridging conditions) is if Raz links adequately his value-pluralism with the perfectionism that he also stands for. He promulgates a perfectionist conception of agency supported by normative reasons anchored in the value of ends, while consistently holding that they also reflect the plurality of the realm of value. But in doing so he sticks to an overwhelmingly strong concept of incommensurability, neutralizing the role of reasons for choice, denying a context-independent way to classify normative considerations as moral or non-moral. This gives an impression of morality as a fragmented domain and undermines the normative force of "moral" considerations, a central issue in Raz's perfection (Wallace, 2004).

## 6. Conclusion

Raz is right to believe there is a wide plurality of reasonable views on ideals of

---

[27]"On the weaker usage, an action is rational if it has not been ruled out by reason" (Mason, 2006).

[28]Sunstein's "extrinsic grounds" "count as reasons but do not depend on any judgment of overall intrinsic worth" (e.g. deciding to swim rather than eat, not because the first is intrinsically better but to lose weight). Sunstein's 'expressive considerations' are "not of overall intrinsic worth but of appropriate ways of valuing social goods and bads" (e.g. choosing between taking care of your sick kid or working) (Sunstein, 1997: p. 240).

[29]In the absence of exact metric ranking, incommensurable options can be chosen due to rational overall assessment of their aesthetic value (e.g. choosing a good concert and not a bad book) (Sunstein, 1997).

the good and, intentionally or not, political action will favour some over others. Given the circumstances of our societies and in order for liberal aspirations to be accomplished or not devitalized, Raz propounds that political morality should actively favour sound ideals of human flourishing like the ones he incorporates in his conditions for autonomous life. Thus, while he shares with several contemporary liberals the noble intention to capture the core of liberal ethos by promoting plurality and autonomy, for him autonomy requires perfectionist ideas and state assistance. He focuses on the cardinal moral affirmation of autonomy together with pluralism as aspects of an ideal of the good leading to a perspective of the political founded on tolerance but not on neutrality (Raz, 2002). Raz's perception of autonomy and the condition he poses for its attainment match well with the way he expects the state to be functioning in a liberal context and with the kind of legitimization he attributes to authority.

In showing that Raz's perfectionism follows a logical sequence founded effectively on the meaning he ascribes to autonomy and in accordance to the role value-pluralism could play, the present approach aimed at enhancing the currently debilitated stream of perfectionist liberalism. In its effort to do exactly that, the current view of Raz's liberal perfectionism had to address certain theoretical complications stemming from the seemingly opposing, but not irreconcilable, elements of his approach. Offering a guide for the consistency between Raz's incommensurability (an integral element of value-pluralism) and his perfectionist account of political morality comprised a constituent part of the essential reconciling process aiming to fend off relevant criticism. Even when viewed as a resourceful exoneration of liberal perfectionism (chiefly by perfectionists), Raz's reasoning is more often castigated than praised, partly due to the contextual defence it uses (McCabe, 2002). Even if McCabe's point has some credibility, overall Raz's perfectionism remains a viable proposal that, mutatis mutandis, could shape and redirect the course of contemporary liberal political theory away from its prioritization of moral and state neutrality.

## Conflicts of Interest

The author declares no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

## References

Barry, B. (1995). *Justice as Impartiality*. Oxford University Press.

Barry, B. (2002). *Culture and Equality: An Egalitarian Critique of Multiculturalism*. Harvard University Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/019924989X.003.0005

Chang, R. (1997). *Incommensurability, Incomparability and Practical Reason*. Harvard University Press.

Chang, R. (2004). Putting Together Morality and Well-Being. In P. Baumann, & M. Betzler (Eds.), *Practical Conflicts: New Philosophical Essays* (pp. 118-158). Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511616402.006

Cherniss, J., & Hardy, H. (2008). Isaiah Berlin. In E. N. Zalta (Ed.), *The Stanford Encyc-*

*lopedia of Philosophy* (Summer Edition).
http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2008/entries/berlin

Crowder, G. (2002). *Liberalism and Value Pluralism*. Continuum.

Crowder, G. (2003). Pluralism, Relativism and Liberalism in Isaiah Berlin. In *The September/October Australasian Political Studies Association Conference*.

Crowder, G. (2004). *Isaiah Berlin: Liberty and Pluralism*. Polity Press.

Crowder, G., & Griffiths, M. (1999). Postmodernism and International Relations Theory: A Liberal Response. In J. Brookfield, *et al.* (Eds.), *Proceedings of the 1999 Conference of the Australasian Political Studies Association* (Vol. 1, pp. 135-145). University of Sydney.

Dancy, J. (2005). Book Review of J. Raz, C. Korsgaard, R. Pippin, and Bernard Williams. *The Practice of Value in Mind, 114,* 189-192. https://doi.org/10.1093/mind/fzi189

Farneti, R. (2006). Philosophy and the Practice of Freedom: An Interview with Joseph Raz. *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy, 9,* 71-84. https://doi.org/10.1080/13698230500475507

Finnis, J. (1987). The Legal Enforcement of "Duties to Oneself": Kant vs Neo-Kantians. *Columbia Law Review, 87,* 433-456. https://doi.org/10.2307/1122666

Galston, W. (2002). *Liberal Pluralism: The Implications of Value Pluralism for Political Theory and Practice*. Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511613579

Galston, W. (2004). *Liberal Purposes: Goods, Virtues and Diversity in the Liberal State*. Cambridge University Press.

Gardbaum, S. A. (1991). Why the Liberal State Can Promote Moral Ideals after All. *Harvard Law Review, 104,* 1350-1371. https://doi.org/10.2307/1341719

Gray, J. (1995). *Isaiah Berlin*. HarperCollins.

Gray, J. (2000a). *Two Faces of Liberalism*. Polity Press.

Gray, J. (2000b). Mill's Liberalism and Liberalism's Posterity. *The Journal of Ethics, 4,* 137-165.

Gray, J. (2002). Agonistic Liberalism. In G. W. Smith (Ed.), *Liberalism: Critical Concepts in Political Theory* (Vol. IV, pp. 3-26). Routledge.

Green, L. (1988). Un-American Liberalism: Raz's Morality of Freedom. *The University of Toronto Law Journal, 38,* 317-332. https://doi.org/10.2307/825789

Griffin, J. (1986). *Well-Being: Its Meaning, Measurement and Moral Importance*. Clarendon Press.

Griffin, J. (1997). Incommensurability: What's the Problem? In R. Chang (Ed.), *Incommensurability, Incomparability and Practical Reason* (pp. 35-51). Harvard University Press.

Haksar, V. (1979). *Equality, Liberty, and Perfectionism*. Oxford University Press.

Hampshire, S. (1983). *Morality and Conflict*. Harvard University Press.

Heuer, U. (2004). Raz on Values and Reasons. In Wallace, *et al.* (Eds.), *Reason and Value: Themes from the Moral Philosophy of Joseph Raz* (pp. 129-152). Clarendon Press.

Hurka, T. (1993). *Perfectionism*. Oxford University Press. https://doi.org/10.1515/9781400821105

Kekes, J. (1993). *The Morality of Pluralism*. Princeton University Press.

Kekes, J. (1998). *A Case for Conservatism*. Cornell University Press.

Kripke, S. A. (1982). *Wittgenstein on Rules and Private Language*. Basil Blackwell.

Kuhn, T. S. (1996). *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. University of Chicago Press. https://doi.org/10.7208/chicago/9780226458106.001.0001

Lyotard, J.-F. (1984). *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge*. University of Minnesota Press. https://doi.org/10.2307/1772278

Mason, E. (2006). Value Pluralism. In E. N. Zalta (Ed.), *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Summer Edition). http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2006/entries/value-pluralism

McCabe, D. (2002). Joseph Raz and the Contextual Argument for Liberal Perfectionism. In G. W. Smith (Ed.), *Liberalism: Critical Concepts in Political Theory* (Vol. III, pp. 493-522). Routledge. https://doi.org/10.1086/233524

Mulhall, S., & Swift, A. (1996). *Liberals and Communitarians*. Blackwell.

Nussbaum, M. C. (1990). Aristotelian Social Democracy. In R. B. Douglass, G. Mara, & H. S. Richardson (Eds.), *Liberalism and the Good* (pp. 202-252, Chapter 10). Routledge.

Pildes, R. H., & Anderson, E. S. (1990). Slinging Arrows at Democracy: Social Choice Theory, Value Pluralism, and Democratic Politics. *Columbia Law Review, 90,* 2145-2165. https://doi.org/10.2307/1122890

Rawls, J. (1973). *A Theory of Justice*. Oxford University Press.

Raz, J. (1986). *The Morality of Freedom*. Clarendon Press.

Raz, J. (1995). Liberalism, Skepticism, and Democracy. In *Ethics in the Public Domain* (pp. 97-124). Clarendon Press. https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780198260691.003.0005

Raz, J. (1997). Incommensurability and Agency. In R. Chang (Ed.), *Incommensurability, Incomparability and Practical Reason* (pp. 110-128). Harvard University Press.

Raz, J. (1999). *Engaging Reason: On the Theory of Value and Action*. Oxford University Press.

Raz, J. (2001). *Value, Respect, and Attachment*. Cambridge University Press. https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511612732

Raz, J. (2002). Liberalism, Autonomy, and the Politics of Neutral Concern. In G. W. Smith (Ed.), *Liberalism: Critical Concepts in Political Theory* (Vol. III, pp. 178-211). Routledge.

Raz, J. (2003). More on Explaining Value: Replies and Comparisons. In *The Practice of Value* (pp. 121-156). Clarendon Press.

Raz, J. (2006). An Interview with Roberto Farneti: Philosophy and the Practice of Freedom. *Critical Review of International Social and Political Philosophy, 9,* 71-84. https://doi.org/10.1080/13698230500475507

Regan, D. H. (1997). Value, Comparability and Choice. In R. Chang (Ed.), *Incommensurability, Incomparability and Practical Reason* (pp. 129-150). Harvard University Press.

Robinette, C. J. (2007). Torts Rationales, Pluralism, and Isaiah Berlin. *George Mason Law Review, 14,* 329-362.

Stocker, M. (1990). *Plural and Conflicting Values*. Clarendon Press.

Stocker, M. (2004). Raz on the Intelligibility of Bad Acts. In Wallace, *et al.* (Eds.), *Reason and Value: Themes from the Moral Philosophy of Joseph Raz* (pp. 303-332). Clarendon Press.

Sunstein, C. R. (1997). Incommensurability and Kinds of Valuation: Some Applications in Law. In R. Chang (Ed.), *Incommensurability, Incomparability and Practical Reason* (pp. 234-254). Harvard University Press.

Wall, S. (1998). *Liberalism, Perfectionism, and Restraint*. Cambridge University Press.

https://doi.org/10.1017/CBO9780511583339

Wall, S. (2008). Perfectionism in Moral and Political Philosophy. In E. N. Zalta (Ed.), *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Fall Edition).
http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2008/entries/perfectionism-moral

Wallace, R. J. (2003). Introduction. In J. Raz (Ed.), *The Practice of Value* (pp. 1-12). Clarendon Press.

Wallace, R. J. (2004). The Rightness of Acts and the Goodness of Life. In Wallace, *et al.* (Eds.), *Reason and Value: Themes from the Moral Philosophy of Joseph Raz* (pp. 385-411). Clarendon Press.

Williams, B. (2003). Relativism, History, and the Existence of Values. In J. Raz (Ed.), *The Practice of Value* (pp. 106-118). Clarendon Press.