

Cultural Encounters

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### **Cultural Encounters**

The main political philosophy in the West today is liberalism. Liberalism believes that people should respect each other without discriminating one's background or cultural differences. It emphasizes that people should enhance togetherness and live harmoniously regardless of their differences in race, culture or background. Furthermore, liberalism ensures that all the people in a particular community have equal rights and privileges and that they are all served in justice. The best definition for liberalism is difference-blind liberalism which simply means that people should try all means of avoiding any difference among themselves that may lead to conflicts and hatred/enmity. In most cases, these problems arise from differences in culture. In this research paper, the main points about liberalism and how people should live together are outlined.

#### How Liberalism Views Humans and their Rights

As said earlier, liberalism aims at ensuring that all humans are treated the same way. Treating people, the same way means that people should be given equal rights and privileges. Moreover, individuals should be treated the same way without favoring a certain ethnic group, community or individual. Giving people equal rights ensures that they live in peace hence putting to an end any conflicts that might be brought about by cultural differences (Donnelly, 2013) When people are given same treatment, there is usually developmental changes that accompany them since they are comfortable working together knowing that nobody among them is favored in any means.

#### Liberalism and Discrimination

It is certain that liberalism does not allow people to discriminate others. Liberalism requires that people be treated the same way and in the right manner without any discrimination. What this means is that people should not discriminate other people on the basis of their color, race or goals. Discrimination means denying the certain benefits that should be enjoyed by every individual in a community for example use of certain services or visit of particular places. Liberalism does not support discrimination in at all. However, there are conditions associated with liberalism for example, the age of a person may limit them from doing certain things. For instance, it is illegal for someone to drink beer in the USA if they are below the age of 21 years.

#### The Rule and Exemption Approach

Although liberalism requires that people be treated in the same manner regardless of their ethnicity or culture, the rule and exemption approach views this differently. The rule and exemption approach tends to allow some minority groups to act in a certain manner as opposed to the rules dictated to the majority. For instance, in the USA, motorists are required to wear a helmet as a means of protection in case of accidents. However, it is against religion for Indian Sikhs to cover their heads with anything other than the religious turbine (Rienzi, 2013). For this reason, these people have to be allowed by the government to drive without the helmets on for religious purposes.

#### The Autonomy Approach

Autonomy is based on one making his/her own rules pertaining his own doings. People make certain rules individually while some rules are made for specific groups based on their cultural grounds or religion. There are rules that are personally defined in such a way that there are ways in which people conduct themselves through moral guidance. Basing this on liberalism,

it is clear that that one may feel restricted from doing certain things just because there are rules impacted by a certain group prohibiting him to do so. For this reason, the person may feel that he/she is not fully liberated which is contrary to the goals of difference-blind. An example in religion is where you find that there are Christians who are guided by certain levels of administration and enjoy certain privileges and there are those that are guided by their own self-governance.

### The Unequal Impact Argument

The unequal impact argument tries to show that there are various social groups or individuals who have unequal rules delegated to them as compared to the majority. This minority group normally has an unequal impact in the basis of liberalism as compared to the majority groups (Rienzi, 2013). What this means is that any law outlined for the public will always have an unequal impact on some people. For instance, there are laws that prohibit smokers from smoking in certain places. The impact that this law will have on non-smokers is totally different from that of smokers. Non-smokers will view the law as good way to preserve a healthy environment while smokers will feel offended and restricted to enjoy their freedom contrary to liberalism.

### Argument by Analogy

Analogy seeks to explain the meaning of liberalism in better way for easier understanding. Viewing liberalism in the basis of analogy depends on the person giving the analogy since people will compare things in terms of how they feel. Critics of liberalism will have a different analogy of liberalism as compared to its supporters. In terms of analogy, there are many ways of comparing liberalism. We can compare liberalism with a tie that fits in

different sets of suits such that a person will look presentable with the tie on regardless of the suit he will be wearing. This means that liberalism doesn't depend on the difference in color to prevail.

#### Argument by Margalit and Raz

Margret Moore argues that nationalism is a normative argument that brings people together and should not be criticized. Moreover, Moore emphasizes that nationalism leads to togetherness of nations. She goes ahead and explains that all nationalist groups are always in the seek for independence and freedom. She forces that these nationalist groups are not grounded on culture at all. However, some liberal nationalists such as Margalit and Raz disagree with her stating that nationalist groups are always grounded on culture. These scholars argue that nationalists are cultural-oriented and this is contrary to liberalism since no one should favor their culture (Pinto, 2015). The cultural differences should not be an issue to different nationalists.

#### Liberalism's Approach to the Issue of Refugees/Migrants

As far as liberalism may be exercised in a state, there are certain considerations and measures that have to be put into account. Following the recent rise in the number of refugees entering the United States of America, it is important to ensure that very tight measures are taken at the borders. Liberalism insists that people be treated the same way regardless of their culture or origin but it becomes hard sometimes to be fully liberal. If a country is fully liberal with refugees, it may pose a threat to its citizens (Nyers, 2013). This is because many terrorist groups

are crossing borders into neighboring countries claiming to be refugees. Furthermore, there diseases are being transmitted across territories due to naivety brought about by liberalism.

In conclusion, liberalism is important for every individual in a community since it ensures that no one is being discriminated or treated in a bad way due to their culture or ethnic nature. However, there are some minority groups that don't see the importance of liberalism since their matters are not addressed according to their will. Nevertheless, the minority normally wins and for this reason, actions that affect the majority group positively are applied. Some groups that have a considerable reason not to fit in certain rules due to their cultures are normally exempted from the rules so that they don't feel isolated from the community. The bottom line is; liberalism ensures that justice prevails in every community.

## References

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