

국제학부 영어 ESSAY 예시 답안

Until recently, most liberal political theory was built on the image of homogeneous societies whose members shared the same nationality, language and culture. After World War II, growing consciousness of group identities and large migrations across national borders combined to make cultural diversity a pressing issue for public policy. The most intense controversies revolve around the meaning of liberty for cultural minorities. Should groups have rights as groups, and, if so, which groups, and rights to what? If learning, having, and preserving a culture are essential to being able to choose a good life, what do host societies owe their cultural minorities in terms of help maintaining a culture?

The passage [A] illustrates these conflicts that might arise in a multicultural society by presenting different arguments about Muslim dress. The arguments demonstrate how “one simple principle” can lead to diametrically opposite policy conclusions. That is, the meaning of liberty can be interpreted differently depending on whether one belongs to a majority (French) or to a minority (Muslim) culture. This conflict can be better understood as a paradox that comes from two concepts of liberty discussed by the philosopher Isaiah Berlin—i.e., negative liberty versus positive liberty. Negative liberty emphasizes that no one should interfere with individual behavior, whereas positive liberty values having active support from others which often necessitates interference with a person’s behavior when necessary to promote one’s good life.

This paradox clearly challenges “liberal principles of equal dignity and equal rights for all humans” the French society has perhaps long valued. The most difficult and contentious question is thus how the French government should respond when elements of a minority culture irreconcilably conflict with values of the majority culture (or when majorities think so)?

What the text appears to suggest, as far as I can see it, is that the way a particular society looks at reality has to be modified, embracing the needs called for by minorities to protect their will or rights to follow their beliefs or to wear veils in this particular case. This notion of liberty is in line with the view of negative liberty. I believe that the French government should not oppress Muslim women’s freedom to choose what they believe and how they behave, despite its conflict with the liberal principle that is prevalent in the host French society. As far as the Muslim women’s wearing veils does no direct harm to the French society, they should not be deprived of their freedom to choose what to wear tailored to their religious beliefs. Of course, this appears to run counter to the other concept of liberty, called “positive liberty” which was a driving force for the French government to ban the veils. Although the rationale behind the ban is grounded on the liberal principle that is thought to ensure human dignity and rights, I believe that the principle can also be taken as a mere vice if it is imposed on people against their will or at the expense of other’s freedom. I therefore argue that the French government should lift the ban on wearing veils. It should instead find a way to educate the majorities, so that they can appreciate the veil wearing merely as a cultural convention that has long been valued in the Muslim society, rather than criticising it as violating the principle of human dignity and rights. This way, the adverse feeling about the Muslim’s religious activity can be alleviated and understood as harmless while protecting minorities’ cultures in this increasingly complex, heterogenous and multicultural society of today.