

HUMR5131 Home Examination II - Exam Questions

Answer one -1- of the following three questions:

1. Are human rights an adequate language for addressing global, national social and political and individual issues or problems? What are the strengths and weaknesses of analysing social and political problems from a human rights perspective? Select and discuss a recent case where recourse to human rights did or did not make a difference. Give reasons why this was so and discuss what could have changed the outcome.

2. Different theories give different accounts of how and why the spread of human rights across the globe after 1948 (when the Universal Declaration of Human Rights was proclaimed) has been so successful -- at least in terms of treaty ratifications by state parties. Discussions about this so-called "human rights revolution" have brought up a variety of explanations, and different scholars emphasise different factors and focus on different levels (domestic, international etc.). Departing from your reading list, give an account of these discussions about the growing importance of human rights. Discuss where they differ and where they complement each other. Finally, select two or more countries and use the theory (or combination of theories) that you think is best for catching the observed spread of human rights.

3. The legal and institutional protection of human rights through regional and international systems is progressively transforming the relations between states. Scholars speak of a "judicialisation of international relations". International courts, in particular, are the new actors of this process. On the base of your reading illustrate the phenomenon and provide reflections on its desirable outcomes as well as possible drawbacks.