

HUMR 5131 – Final assignment – autumn 2017

Choose one of the three questions below:

1.

In his book *The Heart of Human Rights*, Allen Buchanan criticizes a certain view of the relationship between moral human rights and international legal human rights, which he calls “the mirroring view”. Assess critically Buchanan’s criticisms of the mirroring view, and discuss how, in your own view, the relationship between moral human rights and legal human rights should best be construed. Use the readings from the syllabus in your discussion.

2.

Since the end of World War II, the founding of the UN and the adoption of the UDHR in the late 1940s, by and large human rights have established themselves as a kind of blueprint for modern, democratic government in the nation-states of the world. However, the record of human rights implementation within these same nation-states presents, on most accounts, a rather variable picture. How can this variation be understood? What are the factors that can explain the successes or failures of human rights implementation in a given country? Choose at least two countries and base your discussion on an investigation of the relevant factors with the aid of the theoretical perspectives presented on your reading list. What is your assessment of these theories about the openings for and impediments to human rights implementation?

3.

It is often said that the protection of human rights is under increasing pressure these days in different parts of the world. Do you agree with this assessment? How would you discuss this proposition in terms of contending approaches to human rights in international relations, as identified by David Forsythe?

