

## ***Human Rights and Intercultural Ethics<sup>1</sup>***

Franz Martin Wimmer (Vienna, Austria)

„The human rights topic is en vogue, not only in present day-to-day politics, but also in political, legal, and social science, as well as in philosophy.“<sup>2</sup> If Göller’s observation is correct, then not only are the reasons and motivations of such actuality of interest, but – at least concerning philosophy – much rather the question of why any argumentation be necessary in this field at all.

Asked in another way: Whether the validity of human rights *as such* or rather the validity of *certain* basic human rights be yet to be established. We will thus have to treat this theoretic question of justification. Yet there are also other, related questions at least to be pointed out, since in connection with human rights reference will always be made also to „cultural“ differences.

### **Practical Inconsistencies**

The first and at the same time most visible problem is not that concerning difficulties of foundation or theoretical inconsistencies, but such of practical nature. In the largest sense, this problem is of political nature. It englobes, for example, the active influence exercised by national and supranational authorities on other states or political bodies with reference to the enforcement of human rights. Such actions can be of diverse nature, such as classically diplomatic approaches, economic sanctions, or military intervention.

For example, a practical inconsistency can be observed when a state that never guaranteed or acknowledged the right of free choice of religion on the part of its subjects, raises his voice to criticise the restriction of just this right in another state, and to demand its enforcement on behalf of the citizens of that state. This state, though – I mean the Vatican – has no other instrument of power than propaganda. Yet the case is revealing: The only monoconfessional state in the world – presumably

---

<sup>1</sup> Published in: *Menschenrechte, Kulturen und Gewalt. Ansätze einer interkulturellen Ethik*, Eds.: Ludger Kühnhardt and Mamoru Takayama, pp. 345-55. Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2005. English by: Michael Wimmer (Rome, Italy)

<sup>2</sup> Göller (2003) p. 126, transl. MW. It is not overdone of him to speak of the great „number of already existing and on practically a daily basis published publications“, almost impossible to keep in sight.

100% of the inhabitants are Roman-Catholic<sup>3</sup>, unlike any other state, religion or confession – refers time and again to certain basic rights without itself accepting such. Because of reasons quite easily understood – for the lack of means of enforcement other than the ideological ones, and for a similar understanding of the concept of state in states viewing themselves as more or less „theocratic“ – the accusation of inconsistency is usually directed against other states, which, though recognising „the“ human rights and demanding their validity in some other states, do not exercise the latter in an equal way in all places, but rather depending on other interests. The reference is here to American and European industrial states accused of using „the human rights“ only as a pretext, if required. Thus, the Secretary-General of the Arabian Organisation for Human Rights wrote in 2001:

*There are differences ... about the universality of human rights, in this field especially about the possibility of intervention in the interior affairs of a state, connected to the human rights issue. The Arabian governments have of course not missed the point of how the human rights were once used to discredit the Soviet Union and the East European states. Some Arabian governments have desisted from joining the international treaties, especially concerning the human rights, not least because of named two-facedness.<sup>4</sup>*

Named distrust is, as generally known, not limited to Arabian countries or those with Muslim majority, but is discussed also in connection with „Confucian“ or, more generally, „Asian“ values; the literature on the topic is vast. It is of central relevance to intercultural ethics.

Let us – with no realist pretence whatsoever – assume the right of a state of the aforementioned „humanitarian intervention“ for the protection of human rights of citizens of other states to be in existence in an equal way for all states. Let us further assume all the rights declared in the General Declaration of 1948 and in the later UNO-conferences to justify such a right of intervention. Would it then not have been consistently logical for the countries of the Warsaw Pact before 1989 to try to justify an intervention in Western Europe as means of the enforcement of the human right of work<sup>5</sup>? Or if a military intervention against large media groups in the industrial states had been exercised in reference to the right of independent cultural development considered to be threatened by these groups?

---

<sup>3</sup> No evidence is given for this assumption. Decisive information on this issue is relatively difficult to obtain. The number of citizens of the Vatican is likely to be slightly below 1000, demographic data is hardly accessible.

<sup>4</sup> Fayek (2001), transl. MW

<sup>5</sup> General Declaration of Human Rights (1948), Art. 23, 1: „Every human has the right of work, of free choice of occupation, of adequate and satisfying conditions of work, as well as of protection against unemployment.“

Such questions might be dismissed as entirely naive and out-of-touch. Yet they are worth a thought if we want to make clear the philosophical problematics involved, for thus things habitually taken for granted and considered not to need further explanation become questionable.

### **Theoretical Inconsistencies**

A second, in the media public less perceived problem is of jurisdictional nature. Here we find internationally and nationally relevant questions of the binding ratification of pre-positive law, and of their concretization in the respective positive state law systems. In this respect, it is to be noted that not only single state regulations concerning declared basic rights vary heavily in a global context, but also that the international declarations differ from each other on important points.

State or other interests will often be tightly connected to measures meant to enforce human rights, inasfar as the motive of human rights is used only as a pretext, with pretence to intractability. In this case, it is the instrumentalisation of an idea pretended to be generally convincing. If, in fact, it is such, and if this idea expresses vital values and rights, its instrumentalisation seems absolutely understandable. For whichever aims are otherwise pursued, the enforcement of a norm which is at once universally valid and rationally convincing, is in any case justified. The question is whether all this is fulfilled.

It is not a question of philosophy, but much rather of history or political science, to ask whether the human social nature plausibly permits the realisation of perfectly general and purely rational influences on humans on the part of their fellows, without influence of other interests. The influencing control meant to be successful needs to possess the actual power to enforce its own ideas, against opposition and resistance. Superior power is not necessarily connected to superiority in understanding and wisdom.

Thus, there is the strong suspicion that the idea of human rights is, in political reality, part of an ideology serving the specific interests of certain states and other social bodies. Any idea can become immersed in such an ideology, and here we only have to point out how and in which respect this is possible concerning this particular idea.

### **Regional Origin versus Universal Validity**

Concerning the idea of human rights, there are religiously and culturally determined conceptions, of which there are various forms even within the religious and cultural traditions. Thinking of something like a „global ethos“<sup>6</sup>, certain questions come into

---

<sup>6</sup> see Kim (1997-99)

view as important, such as what the nature of aforesaid differences is, of what kind they are, how each of them is to be explained, and how they can be criticised among each other.

The probably most common objection against a universal validity of human right norms is founded in reference to the circumstance that such norms were first designed and declared in Occidental history, and that they are thus supposed to be justifiable only by a conception of man as it is predominant and true in Occidental tradition, yet here in a fundamental way. Thus, as is deduced, certain or even all human rights norms can only be claimed for people who define themselves in a certain way, and that only for these can aforesaid norms be valid.

Thus we find ourselves facing several theses, or claims:

- firstly, that human rights norms were to be considered, primarily or even entirely, the product of the Occidental culture;
- secondly, that these norms were to agree only with a certain conception of man;
- thirdly, that exactly that conception were dominant in the Occidental culture;
- and fourthly, that this human-concept were nor universally predominant or accepted, nor could it be universalizable; and that, thus, norms founded on that concept had no claim to general validity, but merely to a validity limited to a certain manner of people.

Do the human rights ideas only exist in Occidental tradition?

The first thesis is concerned at first only with a question of legal history, which seems simple to answer. There can be no question that the *codification* of human rights in the form of national and international law is primarily part of *Occidental* legal history, as well as of its history of thought. The state declarations of 1776 and 1789, in the *Virginia Bill* and the *Déclaration des droits de l'homme et du citoyen*, have no similar precursors elsewhere. The *General Declaration* of the UNO in 1948 was mainly (we will yet have to set some important restrictions concerning this) determined by Occidental discourses – some of which, though, were contradictory with others. Other declarations – as the *Cairo Declaration* and others – were conceived in its wake or have not formulated any comparably universal claim to validity. Even the proposition of codifying general human duties, made just a few years ago, relied mainly on Occidental proponents.<sup>7</sup>

Is thus to be considered invalid the question of whether other, non-Occidental traditions have developed ideas with the same intention and claim, yet maybe different in the aspects of their contents? In other words: Is it superfluous to search for ideas bearing the essential characteristics of human rights and concerning the basic rights in the traditions of thought of Africa, Asia, or pre-Columbian America? We should not reject the question out of hand just because it is probable to find not exactly the very same norm conceptions as in the Occidental tradition.

Let us for now ignore the fact that the so-called „second generation“ of human rights, the social rights of the „General Declaration“ (right of work, of education, of medical aid, etc.), can be considered to have been actually accepted in an implicit way throughout earlier human history without having been explicitly declared, thus probably being the historically „first generation“. Let us only ask whether such a thing as the consciousness of individuals being entitled not to be hindered in the exercise of certain forms of behaviour and expression has been formulated in any place or way in the pre-modern societies.

Considering this question, reference to the declaration of *Ashoka* is appropriate. This Buddhist ruler of a large empire on the Indian subcontinent had, according to ancient example, inscriptions put on walls of rock and border pillars, which contained the principles valid within those borders. One of these laws, for the execution of which officials were specially appointed, concerned the prohibition of religious intolerance.<sup>8</sup>

<sup>7</sup> See „General Declaration of Human Duties“ in: Die ZEIT, Hamburg, October 3rd, 1997, p. 18, there also the discussions published in the weeks after.

<sup>8</sup> Mall (2003), p. 15 mentions „a Ministry for Religious Matters (Dharmamantralaya) during the reign of the Buddhist king Ashoka (ca. 3.c. B.C.), with the task of looking after the mutual acceptance of the religions.“ (transl. MW.)

Also sufficiently known are the commandments laid down in the *Koran*, which stipulate the toleration of the religious convictions and customs of the „People of the Book“. Though this explicitly refers to Abrahamic religions – Jews, Christians, and Sabaeans – as is Islam itself, an idea was provided which proved to be expandable in the context of realpolitik throughout various phases of Islamic history. Here, not only the history of Islamic Andalusia is relevant, but also that of India. Not to allow such traditions to slide off into oblivion is an important task in the field of history of philosophy in an intercultural orientation.

Still, it must be stressed that even such cases of religious tolerance are not equivalent to the unconditional human right of „freedom of thought, consciousness, and religion“ as laid down in the UNO-declaration in Art. 18. Human rights in this sense are in fact a bourgeois achievement of the modern age, and thus in Europe take the place of conceded – or withheld – special rights.

Yet we are not simply confronting any specific articles, but the general thesis maintaining that the idea of human rights be as such a regional, Occidental phenomenon. That is, at least historically, not the case, even though in many descriptions of the evolution of the concept reference is made only to European events and traditions – the Stoa, the Magna Charta, etc.<sup>9</sup> In this respect it is worth recalling the history of the formulation of the first article of the UNO-declaration. The Article goes as follows:

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

Freedom, equality, dignity, reason, conscience – the „*surplus*“ of moral philosophical content in the first article seems egocentric to an amount as to thwart any normative claim to transcultural validity“, writes Thaler.<sup>10</sup> The wording, though, seems in a fundamental sense not only to be conceived by the Chinese member of the committee doing the editing, but in fact to originate from the thoughts of one of the most important Confucian thinkers of Chinese antiquity, Mencius. The first draft had not

---

<sup>9</sup> It is likely overdone, though still an encouragement to closer observation, of Fayek (2001) to write:

„Even if the West has first used the term of „human rights“, their contents and essence are a result of a long struggle of global humanistic upheaval, in the course of which the Arabians and Muslims have contributed considerably to the confirmation of these rights. Furthermore, the General Declaration of Human Rights is not a purely Western document prescribing us Western ideology. This declaration is the result of negotiations and humanistic commitment, to which the international community – East as West and North as South – has contributed with all its civilisations and cultures all across the UNO. Consequently, it embodies one humanistic act we are equally involved in, and expresses the minimum of agreement between all these states with their different civilisations and cultures.“ (transl. MW.)

<sup>10</sup> Thaler (2002), p. 65 (transl. MW.)

yet mentioned „conscience“ as an essential human definition, a definition brought up by P. C. Chang. He was therein led by an „anthropological standard theme, the origins of which go back into Confucian philosophy: Man can thus mainly be characterised by his ability to feel sympathy (*ren*).“<sup>11</sup>

An indication of this kind of course does not mean to propose that Confucianism *as such* or even Chinese philosophy *as such* would have led to the modern ideas of human rights. But, a warning is given concerning the common assumption of it simply being incompatible with them.<sup>12</sup> Only the refusal of holistic attribution allows a possible argumentation. Paul, in his report on the project „Human rights – philosophical idea and foundation in an intercultural view“<sup>13</sup>, lists the methodological rules to be followed in intercultural philosophy and especially ethics. One of the most important seems to me to avoid mere reference to tradition as well as „ethno- and culture-centric arguments.“

Are human rights norms only compatible with a certain, purely Occidental idea of man?

The second thesis seemingly justifies criticism of the universal validity of human rights. It holds that this kind of norm conceptions were compatible only with a certain idea of man while being incompatible with other conceptions. What then is that Occidental idea of man?

Mouffe, in reference to Panikkar, has spoken of a well-known set of views serving as the basis of the human rights idea, all of which were to be considered typical of Occidental thought. This would be the idea (*a*) of the existence of a universal human nature to be recognised by rational means; (*b*) of the nature of man to be essentially different and superior to all other reality; (*c*) of the individual possessing an absolute

---

<sup>11</sup> Thaler (2002), p. 66 (transl. MW.); see also Twiss (1998) p. 41; cited by Thaler (2002), p. 67: „The wording finally adopted included ‚conscience‘ in addition to ‚reason‘, with the understanding, that ‚conscience‘ was not the voice of an internal moral court but rather the emotional and sympathetic basis of morality [...]. This was a basic Confucian concept inscribed in the opening article of the Universal Declaration, a fact that ought to suggest us (1) international human rights are not, contrary to the common perception, simply an ethnocentric Western construction, and (2) the Confucian tradition may well be compatible with and have more to contribute to a proper understanding of these rights.“

<sup>12</sup> Thaler (2002), p. 68 cites de Bary (1998), p. 5f: „It is obvious enough that Confucianism itself did not generate human rights concepts and practices equivalent to those now embodied in the Universal Declaration; it is not obvious that Confucianism was headed in an altogether different authoritarian or ‚communitarian‘ direction, incompatible with the rights affirmed in the Declaration. Our aim has not been to find twentieth-century human values — historically embedded in, but at the same time restive with, repressive institutions in China — that in the emerging modern world could be supportive of those rights. In this our concern is not so much to render judgement on the past record as to clarify the bases on which past judgements have been made — those which could inform our understanding of human rights as still in the process of formation.“

<sup>13</sup> See Paul (2001) with extensive literature.

and irreducible dignity to be defended against society and state; (d) of the individual autonomy requesting the organisation of society in a nonhierarchical way, as a sum of free individuals.<sup>14</sup>

Here do two questions arise: First of them, whether it is true that all these assumptions are „distinctively Western“. The second question is not necessarily connected to the first: Whether the idea of general human rights can be linked only to a conception of man such as this, and to no other.

ad a) Philosophy not referring solely to Occidental traditions will have to add a few sceptic notes to the first question. Confucian as well as Islamic philosophers will very well agree with the assumption of the existence of a universal human nature to be recognised by rational means.

ad b) Just as well, many of them can agree with the second thesis, setting the human nature substantially above all other things and life forms.

Of course, that does not allow the conclusion that these views were unquestioned in „Chinese“ philosophy; central conceptions of early Daoism would contradict that.<sup>15</sup> It would thus not be an „Eastern“ idea in an anyhow questionably generalising sense, but just as well, it is not only a „Western“ one.

ad c) The third cited view, which yields the basis of one of the most discussed questions concerning individual rights, can as well not simply be attributed to the Occident. The simple question of who has precedence in case of a conflict between „state“ and „individual“ – at times the topic is in fact reduced this relation<sup>16</sup> – should at least accept that: „Especially ‚Chinese Ethics‘ emphatically formulate concepts of individual moral autonomy.“<sup>17</sup>

ad d) Thus the fourth idea remains as one that were radicated purely in an Occidental background: the idea of man as an autonomous subject from which were to be necessarily deduced a certain, nonhierarchical order of society and state.

Is the prevailing Occidental idea of man that of an autonomous subject?

The third thesis assumes that the concept of an autonomous subject that completely coincides with the individual is the leading or even only image the Occidental human

<sup>14</sup> Mouffe (2003): „Panikkar convincingly argues that the concept of human rights relies on a well known set of presuppositions, all of which are distinctively Western namely: there is a universal human nature that can be known by rational means; human nature is essentially different from and higher than the rest of reality; the individual has an absolute and irreducible dignity that must be defended against society and the state; the autonomy of that individual requires that society be organised in a nonhierarchical way, as a sum of free individuals.“ See Panikkar (1982).

<sup>15</sup> In the *Dao De Jing* (ch. 25) „Man takes for law the earth“, also to be translated as „man follows earth“. The interpretation of this passage in context suggests that „man“ is just not fundamentally different from natural things.

<sup>16</sup> See Levinson/Ember (1996): „Human rights are usually framed as the rights of the individual in relation to state ...“. Cited by Thaler (2002)

<sup>17</sup> Paul (2001), Paragraph 18 (transl. MW.)

has of himself. Autonomous is that which or who sets the rules of its or his own acting by itself or himself. Until Kant required the individual human to fulfil that, the only subject of autonomy was considered the sovereign, in a contemporary view, the state. In the view of Kant, the autonomous subject can only be such because and insofar his reason suffices to „orient himself in thought“. That is, that it does not need to follow reward or punishment, hopes or fears, examples or the opposition of them.

The idea of the individual human being the autonomous subject in all things is probably only to be understood on the backdrop of a certain form of Christianity, in the view of which the individual obtains a special position. There is no metempsychosis doctrine that would diminish the uniqueness of the Christian human, and each individual is judged alone by her or his deeds, respectively atrocities. Even if this reference to the Christian background does not say that the modern idea of human rights were arisen directly from Christianity – which in fact it is not –, it yet points out an important root. Other religions have yielded the background for other views of what is human, without the concept of universal equality.

Various conditions of reason and the subject, though, do very well have their place also in the Occidental self-image. To mention but a few: Structuralism taught autonomy to be an illusion and the subject to be dead, and Freud had realised: „The I is not master in its own house.“ Marx had spoken of the mole invisibly burrowing beneath which sets the possibilities for the „diversely behaving phenomenological consciousness of the subject“; Hegel speaks of short-lived individuals used by the „spirit“ according to its ends: he “has nations and individuals enough” to dispense. These are not images of the autonomy of the subject. We look in vain for the autonomous subject also in dialogue philosophers such as Feuerbach, Buber, or Merleau-Ponty.

And, after all, neither does the uniqueness and unmistakableness simply mean autonomy to European Christianity as a whole.

Can regionally developed norms obtain universal validity?

According to the fourth thesis, the concept of man as an individually autonomous subject is not only not universally developed but even not universalisable. Thus, there is no norm based on it, which would be binding to *all* people. The first part of the thesis will be admissible without significant doubt: The idea has not become generally convincing in the Occident either.

Yet the thesis also holds that this or another image of man were impossible to universalise, as when it were detached from its religious or otherwise regional background, and proved reasonable to all humans. This possibility is challenged in a separative-centric way by assuming views and ideas developed in certain societies

or traditions to be valid only to members of these societies, or within a certain cultural tradition. Who arguments in this fashion, though, retreats to a separatist ethno-philosophy, inasfar as even the possibility of argumentation is denied.

Philosophy is permanently faced with traditionalism and dogmatism, yet it must reflect on its own possibilities. These are found in argumentation and various, polylogical analysis.

It is hardly surprising if dogmatic followers of a religion take a separatist position. Yet also with religious people, there are different levels of conviction of the exclusive validity of their opinions. I will refer three of these, from Islamic tradition.

a) A *refusal of dialogue* could maybe be expressed in this way:

*The reference to other sources than that of Islam and thus to other cultures which in their foundation, objective, and view of life differ fundamentally from Islamic culture, is by no means to be permitted.*<sup>18</sup>

If such wording is to be taken seriously, there is probably no useful argumentation under these circumstances. But philosophy just does not have any sacred books and can thus not exclude „reference to other sources“; the latter need much rather to be looked for. That counts for all parties. It counts also for Western human rights discourses refusing dialogue when they refuse to accept „other sources“ than those of their own tradition.

b) The practical meaning of this can be clarified looking at the attempt of self-immunisation made in the final article of the *Cairo Declaration of Human Rights in Islam*<sup>19</sup>, which at the first glance merely seems improper. Art. 25 of this declaration reads:

*„The Islamic Shari'ah is the only source of reference for the explanation or clarification of any of the articles of this Declaration.“*

This seems to present a fundamental difficulty for any kind of analysis if thus the claim is raised of not even involving anyone other than Islamic scholars. Yet the article could also contain the request of entering the discourse in such a way that all who wish to discuss any of the articles need to be familiar with the shar'ia, as it is the intellectual background of the declaration. This is an entirely legitimate *request of understanding* which also, when fulfilled, needs to be acknowledged. An immunisation incompatible with any philosophic approach would be to require also

<sup>18</sup> Redaktion (1998) p. 14 (transl. MW.)

<sup>19</sup> Internet Source: Islamic Human Rights Documents:  
<http://www.iifhr.com/IslamicHumanRightsDocuments.htm> [June 10th, 2003]

the unquestioned acceptance of shar'ia, beyond its thorough understanding. But that should not be necessarily supposed, nor should it be, among philosophers, conceded. With the human rights question, a behaviour the like of which Larson believes to often have to contrast in connection with comparative philosophy, should not be sustainable on the long run anyway: A „misplaced civility“ of such a kind as to favour the prevalence of „a remarkable cordiality across cultural lines“, a suspension of mutual criticism meaning not dialogue or polylogue, but merely not taking seriously the respective other.<sup>20</sup> Herein is also to be found the border line between „comparative“ philosophy and philosophising with intercultural orientation: That the first can possibly practise comparison for its own sake, without philosophic-systematic intention.<sup>21</sup>

c) A third example, taken from a Shi'it author, can illustrate how also in human rights questions, it is possible to simply propose challengeable *arguments*. In connection with the inequality of men and women concerning the divorcement laws, Musawi Lari writes:

*Because Islam aims at lasting marriages, certain liberties are denied in the interest of this aim. Except for truly extraordinary cases, the man alone has the right to divorce. This happens to protect the interests of the woman, and to protect her from falling pray to her desires. [...] Considering the mental delicacy of the woman, she is not granted the power to quit a shared life.*

For a reason he gives: „The decisions of men are predominated by the head, those of women by the heart.“<sup>22</sup>

This reason is, however one might see the question itself, not a dogmatic-religious argument, but an assertion of facts, and thus verifiable. Its being founded on a certain tradition does not make it in any way true or false. Paul writes: „No tradition can be justified on the basis of itself or of attributes etc. proper to it.“<sup>23</sup>

Yet it is necessary to add that each tradition must be taken seriously in the sense that it needs to undergo critical examination, and is not simply rejected. The path also to the demonstration of universal validity of human rights is one of dialogues or polylogues and thus has only one true condition – people taking each other seriously as arguing persons.

---

<sup>20</sup> cf. Larson (1989) p. 16

<sup>21</sup> See Rao (1997) p. 297: „When it is an end in itself, comparisons between concepts, thinkers, or schools of another tradition with those of one's own tradition are made for their own sake.“

<sup>22</sup> Musawi Lari (ca. 1977) p. 136 (transl. MW.)

<sup>23</sup> Paul (2001), paragraph 10. (transl. MW.) He continues: „Otherwise all traditions could claim the same grade of validity. This means that the criteria of the worth of a tradition must be of external nature.“

Cited literature:

- de Bary, Theodore Wm. (1998): Introduction, in: de Bary, Theodore Wm./Weiming, Tu (Hg.), Confucianism and Human Rights, New York, p. 1-26
- Fayek, Mohammed (2001): Die Menschenrechte im Zeitalter der Globalisierung. Eine arabische Sicht. On the Internet: <http://www.ibn-rushd.org/Deutsch/FAYEK-germ.htm> [Visited: June 1st, 2003]
- Göller, Thomas (2003): Menschenrechte und Interkulturalität. In: Wierlacher, Alois und Andrea Bogner (Ed.): Handbuch interkulturelle Germanistik. Stuttgart: Metzler. p. 126-132
- Kim, Yersu (1997-99): The Unesco Universal Ethics Project. (Several Reports) Paris: UNESCO
- Larson, Gerald J. (1989): Introduction: The 'age-old distinction between the same and the other'. In: Larson, Gerald J. und Eliot Deutsch (Ed.): Interpreting across boundaries. New essays in comparative philosophy. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, p. 3-18
- Levinson, David und Melvin Ember (Ed.): Encyclopedia of Cultural Anthropology New York 1996, Article: Human Rights and Advocacy Anthropology
- Mall, Ram Adhar (2003): Zur Theorie und Praxis der Toleranz. Eine interkulturelle und interreligiöse Perspektive. Frankfurt/M.: Lembeck
- Mouffe, Chantal (2003): Democratic Values, Human Rights and Pluralism (unpublished lecture text of the conference Diversity, Justice, and Democracy, Vienna)
- Musawi Lari, Sayid Mujtaba (ca.1977): Westliche Zivilisation und Islam. Muslimische Kritik und Selbstkritik. Qom: Musavi Lari Foundation of Islamic C.P.W.
- Panikkar, Raimundo (1982): Is the notion of Human Rights a Western Concept?, In: Diogenes 120
- Paul, Gregor (2001): Philosophie der Menschenrechte. Ergebnisse eines Projekts. polylog. Forum für interkulturelles Philosophieren 2 (2001), 1-19. Im Internet: <http://www.polylog.org/them/2/prs3-de.htm>
- Rao, Srinivasa (1997): Comparative metaphysics: means or end. In: Smart, Ninian (Hg.): East-West encounters in philosophy and religion. London. p. 292-299
- Redaktion (1998): Islam oder Menschenrechte. In: explizit. Das politische Magazin für ein islamisches Bewusstsein, Vol. 6, No. 21
- Thaler, Mathias (2002): Antworten auf den Kulturrelativismus. Eine philosophische Untersuchung aktueller Debatten zur Universalität der Menschenrechte. Vienna: Dissertation

Twiss, Sumner B. (1998): A Constructive Framework for Discussing Confucianism and Human Rights, in: de Bary, Theodore Wm./Weiming, Tu (Ed.), Confucianism and Human Rights, New York, p. 27-53