

The most important question concerning the inquiry into the compatibility of human- and community rights has to be whether those two differ so significantly, that attempts of reconciliation have to be considered. Defined human rights are not new to the 20th century. Instead, the world's oldest recorded charter of human rights dates back to 538 BC, but for the purpose of this paper, all reference to human rights shall be understood as the 1948 United Nation's Universal Declaration of Human Rights and two subsequent legally binding covenants, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, both opened for signature in 1966 and entered into force a decade later.

Human rights are divided into negative (rights to be free from) and positive human rights (rights to). They derive from natural law, the doctrine that just laws are immanent in nature and can only be discovered but not created. Human rights are absolute rights, but often contain a possession-paradox. They are sometimes called "inalienable", which means that their alienation results in a life left not considerable a fully human life. Human rights are no favours by the powerful, but instead part of the human status, with all humans being equal. Being a human alone entitles possession of these rights. Human rights can be categorized into civil, political, economical, social and collective rights. Some arguments concerning a hierarchical approach concerning these rights exist, but critics argue that a discussion whether the right to life is superior to that to holidays with pay undermines the validity of paid vacations as a right. Overall, the idea of human rights is closely connected to that of political individualism, thus the classic liberal idea of a society consisting of independent, rational beings quite capable of making up their own minds about what is best for them. Difficulties attached to such rights can be considered as "extremism of rights"; for example the capability of rights to turn individuals righteous without regard to their surroundings or self-righteous. Especially the self-righteous seem dangerous, as their insistence on other's benefiting from what they regard as right might appear utterly wrong, especially if motives of self-righteousness appear on the battlefield after weapons of mass destruction have gone.

From a liberal point of view, universal human rights do not have to be reconciled with the rights of the community, as fully applied human rights based upon western rationalism nurture humans towards individuated individuals. But what would happen to a bee colony if a drone would be free to be a worker or something completely different instead? Clearly, the community would collapse under fully a fully applied and appreciated Bee Bill of Rights, unless of course the individuated individual bee would come to the rational conclusion that collectivism is the politico-social design of choice. Nevertheless, the community as a whole would be better off if every bee just stayed a drone or a worker and fulfilled its task. It seems questionable whether humans will be able to survive for as long as bees.

The extreme example of the bee ought to clarify that communal rights or interests are not necessarily compatible with individual rights. Of course, human beings are hardly comparable with bees and human societies inherently more complex, but it can be argued that fully applied human rights are indeed relatively incompatible within selected communities. A society made up of cloned Friedrich Hayeks would not see a problem of cultural relativism concerning human rights. Many cultures without human rights as chartered by the United Nations claim the risk of western, cultural imperialism as a result of the rights full application. If a community's culture does not include a free right to marry or representative governments everybody, male or female, can participate in, are human rights violated or is this accusation voiced by the self-righteous outsider lacking a tolerance towards cultural relativism? Can the universal human rights and community rights as interpreted by such a culture be reconciled? Is it legitimate to override cultures based on Confucianism if the liberal outcome might be far less beneficial for the community than for the individual? How can human rights, often understood as minimal rights allowing for cultural diversity, coexist if the one hammers out a right for fully individuated individuals and the other requires the individual to self-concept him- or herself as essentially socio-centric? The accusation of cultural imperialism seems hard to dismiss and most Westerners will find it hard to suppress self-righteousness in such instances.

It seems striking that agreements for human rights exist while an UN declaration on the rights of communities does not seem to do so. Of course, the individuated individuals form communities themselves and Western society has evolved in such manners, but it seems wrong to force others to do so. A liberal would argue that enselved individuals would always be able to become what they want to, Confucians for example, but chances are that not all would and the Confucian society would cease to exist. This, of course opens up new business opportunities, such as commercial nursing homes, in Confucian societies struggling with western individualism, but a reconciliation between human rights and traditional rights of such a community appears difficult.

In conclusion, a reconciliation of human rights and rights of reasonable communities (it should be allowed to feel self-righteous towards a theoretical community proclaiming torture as an end in itself) would require a redefinition of human rights. Without a doubt, most communities and cultures have their own concepts of human rights, not always compatible with the United Nation's doctrine of such, and even though a rationalizing Westerner would always be tempted to declare all contents of the doctrine superior to differing culturally accepted variations, this might be wrong. Also, the liberal claim that upon the process of becoming an individuated individual in the name of westernized basic human rights everybody would be able to choose freely how to live might be wrong, as the capacity for the nonreflexive feelings communal living depends upon might be lost in the process. Therefore, if we grant communities the right to function as they traditionally did, a reconciliation of human rights and communal rights requires recognition of cultural relativism. From a liberal point of view, such a pick and choose-approach towards human rights constitutes an abuse of these, but without a selective approach, communities get abused. A clarification about a preferred abuse seems impossible, as the self-righteousness of a community collides with the self-righteousness of those proclaiming "superior" rights.